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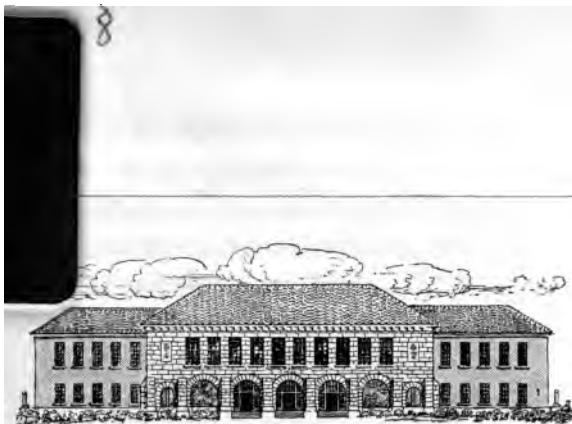
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# CHILDHOOD



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## **CHILDHOOD**



# CHILDHOOD

BY

MRS. THEODORE W. BIRNEY

Founder of the National Congress of Mothers

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

G. STANLEY HALL, Ph.D., LL.D.

Author of "Adolescence," etc.

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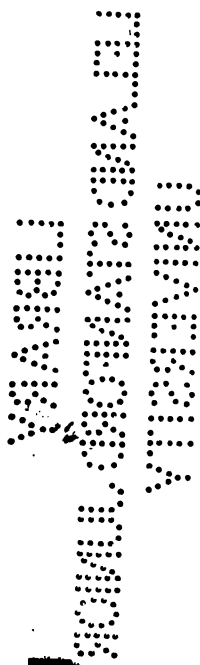
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## DEDICATION

*TO the memory of my husband, whose loving comprehension of my thought of the Mothers' Congress, and earnest co-operation in its early development, until his death in July, 1897, were, and still are, a source of inspiration to me. Also to my Mother, whose faithful ministrations in my home made possible my seven years of active service in the Mothers' Congress, and whose sympathy with this work for a more enlightened parenthood and happier childhood knows no diminution.*



## INTRODUCTION

The proof of this little book has been mostly read aloud in my family with growing pleasure and profit. It makes little pretense to erudition, and there are no learned footnotes or bibliographies; but the author must either have absorbed and quietly digested the best that the authorities have to offer, or else she writes with a head and heart so full of motherhood and so freighted with its lessons and with the new and higher sense of its meaning that she has found the right way by intuition. I regret that I have never seen the home or children of my friend, the author, but it cannot be the fault of her instincts or insights if they are not both ideal.

It is a book for fathers and especially for mothers, and I count it a pleasure and an honor to have an opportunity of heartily commending it to both. Its author is the founder and the first president of the Mothers' Congress, and the book admirably expresses in practical form the parental regimen which, as I understand it, it is the spirit of that beneficent organization to cultivate.

## INTRODUCTION

It leaves for the most part to other manuals suggestions for the physical care of early infancy, and is devoted chiefly to childhood and youth and to both boys and girls. It has a unique character and place and cannot fail to be heartily welcomed. It presents in unusually attractive, clear and forcible English the substance of what parents most need to know in order to make their influence more felt for good upon the rising generation.

G. STANLEY HALL.

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# CHILDHOOD

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

That parenthood is a vocation no thoughtful person will deny; but the saddest part of it all is, that men and women are called to fill this vocation without any real training for it, and often with a very vague sense of the responsibilities it involves. Public opinion is gradually awakening to the fact that while parental instinct is valuable to a certain degree, it must be supplemented with knowledge of the moral, mental and physical nature of childhood or the best results cannot be attained; hence we see Mothers' Clubs and Parents' Clubs springing up in various localities, while current literature teems with books and articles bearing upon child life in all its phases.

There are two distinct classes of parental duties. In one class may be placed all those obligations to the material needs of childhood which



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are external or visible; for example, suitable diet, clothing, housing, exercise and other things which relate chiefly to the physical well-being of the child, but upon which its moral and mental development are in great measure dependent. These duties have so often been defined by specialists that it is not my purpose to enter into a discussion of them here, but rather to implore both fathers and mothers to find the best that has been written on these topics, and study it with ardor and enthusiasm. I use the word both advisedly, for while mothers are the chief caretakers of the children, they are entitled to the coöperation of the fathers.

The second class consists of duties that are more subtle and not so easily to be defined. The first thought to keep constantly in mind in contact with children, is this: Strive yourself to be as nearly as you can, what you wish them to become. That "example is greater than precept" is a truth of great significance when applied to home relations. Children are imitative beings, and readily adopt manners and habits of those about them.

There is no vocation which calls for a higher

## INTRODUCTORY

order of character development than parenthood, and to be a wise as well as a good mother or father requires consecration and concentration. Half the battle is won when the responsibility is clearly recognized and the resolution formed to meet it to the best of one's ability. This attitude of mind precludes to a great extent those bugbears of our strenuous lives, the imaginary conflicting duties. There is a trinity of parental duty in home life—parents' duties toward each other, toward their children and toward themselves—and while outside claims are by no means to be ignored, the home duties should always have precedence over them.

We are all familiar with the nerve-wearing feeling that there are half a dozen things we ought to be doing, beside the imperative one thing which cannot be left undone. Such a mental state in a mother is destructive of all real serenity in the home. "The present moment is a powerful Deity"; it is all that we ever really have, and in proportion as we make the most of it, in the highest sense do we attain harmony. The mother or father who listens with abstracted air to childish prattle or to the experiences, hopes and fears of

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older children, seldom has the close confidence of sons and daughters at the critical periods in their lives, when that confidence would prove a stronghold from all manner of indiscretions. A good rule is to give your immediate attention to anything in the nature of a confidence. Much valuable light on temperament and tendencies is gained from such spontaneous outpourings. Reprimand at such a time is apt to check future confidences; a safer way is to endeavor to get the point of view of the child, and to suggest and lovingly advise without showing the faintest diminution of interest in the situation. If the matter is one which calls for serious admonition, it may be given later. A rather earnest way of saying, "Well, dear, I should like to hear more about this; we must talk it over again, when I've had a little time to think about it. I am so glad you told me of it." After a while it will be much easier to draw attention to mistakes without estranging the author of them. Sympathy is the golden key which unlocks the realm of childhood to all who would enter.

Twin sister to sympathy is patience, and no vocation calls for a greater supply of this truly

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saintly virtue than that of parenthood. How often a day is begun with the resolution to be patient with the children, no matter how many outside worries assail, and how often it happens that they become a channel for the vent of irritability before the noon hour is reached; and another parental failure is recorded.

The erroneous sense of proprietorship with which parents are wont to regard their children is a source of many mistakes in their management. If the point of view of privileged guardianship should supersede that of ownership, it is probable the children of to-day would be accorded a uniform degree of respect and consideration, which would give them a clearer idea of justice and would better fit them for parental duties and citizenship than the extravagant endearments frequently lavished upon them one hour, to be followed by indiscriminate punishment in the next. Children have a very keen sense of justice and are quick to detect its absence in those about them; hence they must often, in their secret souls as well as outwardly, resent that interference which neither wisely directs nor controls, but hampers and hinders unnecessarily. My per-

## CHILDHOOD

sonal observation is that most childish disputes are more easily adjusted by a simple argument concerning the justice in the case than by any other method.

As far as possible, children should be allowed freedom of choice. I know a little girl with an uncommonly strong will, whose self-control and judgment are developing most satisfactorily under this treatment. When any of the every-day problems of a nature to invite a conflict of wills, present themselves, her mother considers for a moment, and if there be nothing vital at stake, she allows the little girl to carry out her desires. There are often reasons why it would be better for the child not to have her way, and in such cases her mother simply says, if it be, for instance, a desire to wear some special dress, "Well, dear, of course you can wear that dress this afternoon, but mother thinks she would not, if she were you, for, you know, it is your very best white dress, and if you should be invited to a party or need it for some special occasion, you would be very sorry if it were soiled." Sometimes there have been tears and the little girl has been persistent, whereupon her mother has said, "Why, certainly,

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dear, it is *your* dress; mother only thought she should remind her dear little girl, that there might be other afternoons when she would want it more, but mother is quite ready to fasten it for you." I have never known that little girl to insist actively after that; she is usually silent and very thoughtful for a few moments; and then with a little sigh, before the victory is finally won, she says, "Never mind, mamma; I guess I'd better save it." Angry exclamations, weeping and occasionally even tantrums are, alas! not unusual occurrences in nurseries where the presiding geniuses still believe that the sooner a child's will is broken, the more easily will he be managed.

It is this very process of "managing" which, on behalf of the child, I resent. It is development of the mental qualities that constitutes and strengthens character, and it is only through exercise that such qualities are liberated. Children's lives are made up of details, of happenings which, to the superficial onlooker, seem trivialities, and yet their joys and sorrows, hopes, fears and disappointments are far more vivid than ours. They are lacking in a sense of perspective and often have hazy notions of the relations of things; con-

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sequently, we cannot deal fairly with them unless we endeavor by every power and faculty at our command to get their point of view. That accomplished, it is comparatively easy to rule through loving suggestion.

I am a firm believer in obedience, but just as soon as the child is old enough to reason—and this age is reached much earlier than we usually assume—the obedience due to *law* should be given equal prominence with the obedience due to individuals. Law is universal; the child meets it at every turn; it is impartial, if relentless, and its rewards to its adherents are as certain as its punishments for disobedience. Parents cannot be always with their children to guide and control; and the sooner they teach them the inevitable operation of law, the better fitted the latter will be to meet life. I have in mind two mothers who resorted to different methods to obtain promptness in their children. The first became their mentor, calling to them each morning to get ready for school many minutes before it was necessary, following the call with a continuous supervision of their preparations and with frequent excited ejaculations such as, “You’ll be late; do hurry.

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It is almost nine o'clock" (when it was in reality barely half-past eight), until the children were off and out of hearing. This same mother had a habit of setting the clock forward, and this being discovered by the children their demoralization was complete. They are now grown men and women, and they have told me that they attribute their habits of procrastination and tardiness to the faulty training they received in childhood.

The second mother, as soon as her children reached school age, said to each one very earnestly, "Now, my dear, you have learned to tell the time, and mother as well as your teacher will expect you to be always prompt at school. Mother will remind you the first two or three mornings, but after that you must depend entirely upon yourself." It happened in the first or second week that the child, becoming interested in something else, forgot to make his preparations in time to reach school before the bell sounded; but the one lesson in tardiness was sufficient to ensure perfect punctuality thereafter. Though this mother knew the child would be tardy, she did not depart from her rule not to remind him; and



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the result was that her children early learned the value of time, while punctuality became second nature to them. No one could have been more sympathetic than she over the one tardiness, but at the same time she very gently and lovingly encouraged the child to realize that if he were careful it need not occur again.

The same principle of direction (I prefer it to the word government), judiciously applied in the home, will solve many of the every-day problems of life without that friction which is most injurious to the nervous organism of a child, to say nothing of the mental strain upon the parents. Can anything more cruelly mistaken be imagined than the plan of that mother who deliberately disappoints her children at frequent intervals, in order to prepare them, as she expresses it, for the disappointments of life. Poor little souls, they learn the sad part of life, alas! too early, many of them; and we have enough to do to teach them to look for the silver lining and to keep a brave heart, even if the passing cloud be so dark as to give no hint of silver. Discipline waits for no invitation; it comes to all in one

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form or another, unsolicited, and often proves truly a blessing in disguise, but such discipline is part of God's great plan, and not such as the poor, misguided mother made use of.

The majority of parents are willing to sacrifice themselves in large ways for their children and in minor matters of their own choosing, but they are often guilty of little selfishnesses which quite obscure to a child's limited vision the greater things done for him. For instance, every adult knows the delight of the small tot who is allowed to sit on the end seat of an open car. I have seen a large woman deposit her little boy on the seat between herself and another very stout woman, in spite of the tearful, pleading little face, and then proceed to gossip over his head with her neighbor. After a few futile efforts to see, he sinks back against the seat, a pathetically resigned little figure. His beautiful world of carriages, ✓ automobiles, wonderful draught horses, the fascinating, endless procession of people, the occasional organ grinders, all whizzing past, while he is as remote from all enjoyment in them, save for the clamor, as though he were on a prairie.

In contrast with this mother is the sympathetic,

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thoughtful parent who willingly places the little chap on the end seat, if it be available, merely holding his hand as a matter of safety, and kindly answering his questions to the best of his or her ability; by smiles and genuine interest that parent binds closer than by any mere hand-clasp the eager little soul, which expands and fairly radiates happiness under the influence of such tender consideration. These are all simple every-day illustrations, but the principles I seek to emphasize are applicable to the most complex problems, as every parent can demonstrate who conscientiously believes that there is no nobler, finer mission in life than that with which he is charged.

Appeal to the highest sentiments in your children and the response will be gratifying. There are simple systems of rewards for very young children, which are of assistance in helping to establish certain beneficial habits at an age when habits are easily formed; but the rewards should be discontinued as the child grows older, and the appeal should then be made to his sense of justice, of altruism and to the other virtues which children often possess in an uncommon degree.

## CHAPTER II

### AMUSEMENTS

It would be of infinite advantage to the childhood of the world if every young woman could, in the course of her education, have at least one year in a kindergarten training school. There are women who are endowed with a marvellous spirit of maternity and who seem to know by intuition how to amuse, direct and develop their children in the best way; but such women are rare, and the majority of mothers are often at their wits' ends to find suitable amusements and occupations for their young children. In communities where kindergartens flourish the children from four to six years of age who attend them are well provided with occupations and games; these, the ready mother who is wise enough to visit the kindergarten, can in a measure adapt to home needs.

The children should be encouraged to sing the songs, repeat the stories and play the games in

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their homes which they have learned in the kindergarten or primary grades. These often prove a source of healthful diversion for father and mother, the older brothers and sisters, as well as a means of development to the child through a use of his newly acquired power in a field outside the school.

It is interesting to an adult and helpful to a child for the former to draw forth the child's conception of things seen and heard. By this means children are taught to express what they feel and think, and are thereby saved suffering in later life through unnecessary repression. The busiest mother can learn a few stories "by heart," as the children say, and these may be told over and over again, for familiarity with a story usually increases its charm for a child; and I believe all kindergartners are agreed that a story well told is of more vital interest and has a higher educational value than one which is read. However, the great majority of mothers need not be discouraged because of lack of time in which to commit stories to memory, for any really good story either told or read will receive rapt attention from eager young listeners.

## AMUSEMENTS

The following is a list of inexpensive articles any or all of which will serve as sources of amusement and occupation: Hailmann beads; glass beads (large); buttons; colored sticks; blocks of all shapes, especially large ones (young children delight in handling large objects, and this preference has a physical basis which should not be ignored; give a three-year-old a small set of blocks and some of the large ones which carpenters now make to order, and the small ones will remain untouched most of the time, while hours will be given to the others); rubber balls, large and small; old ribbons, pieces of braid or strips of cloth for weaving; strips of colored paper for weaving paper mats; scissors with very blunt points; old magazines and papers from which pictures may be cut; a generous pot of gum tragacanth paste with brushes for *each* child; scrap-books of cloth or paper (these can easily be of home manufacture with pasteboard as covers); sand, if only a large panful—it can be played with on an old sheet or mat spread over the floor; pencils (at ten cents a dozen) and a good pencil sharpener; cheap writing pads and old memorandum or account books with unused

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leaves; colored crayons; chalk; paints; pictures drawn and pricked on Bristol board and then outlined; worsted needles for outlining; gay-colored odds and ends of worsted for knitting and simple crocheting; bean-bags; empty spools; shavings; feathers from barnyard fowls; shells and stones; seeds and nuts of all kinds; corncobs, acorns, Autumn leaves, grasses, ferns and fruits; a window garden with plants and vines in a large box or in several small flower-pots; a globe with gold-fish, a much less expensive gift than many people imagine; colored paper; clay; mechanical and garden tools; mother's or sister's cast-off skirts, bonnets, veils and wraps (where is there a child who does not delight in dressing up?); old canes for horses; material for patchwork; dolls' clothes to be sewed; material for small button bags; calendars, cornucopias, valentines, Easter cards, memorandum books, etc.

As for games, there is a great number which can be played without the assistance of any of the material mentioned. Music books and story books should be obtained, at the cost of personal sacrifice, if necessary, on the part of every member of the family. I am only one of many who receive

## AMUSEMENTS

in the course of a year hundreds of letters from parents all over the country, each containing the same request, "Please tell me what books to read to help me discharge my duties as a parent," and, "What literature shall I give my children?"

In response to this need the National Congress of Mothers published two classified book lists, one of books helpful to parents and educators, and the other a list of some of the best books for children. These lists may be procured at a nominal price. There are also valuable lists published by the International Kindergarten Union and other associations. To the mothers of young children Katherine Beebe's two books, *Home Occupations for Little Children* and *The First School Year*, are worth many times their weight in gold, while *Bits of Talk About Home Matters*, by "H. H.," and *A Study of Child Nature*, by Elizabeth Harrison, will prove wonderful eye and heart openers to many parents who make their "busy lives" an excuse for much unintentional but, nevertheless, serious injustice to their children.

In some instances children find the material provided for their indoor amusement so alluring



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that they do not take as much outdoor exercise as they should. In such cases the attractions should be removed until the weather renders it advisable to return them. Children cannot have too much of outdoor life in moderate weather. With even a limited amount of imagination children will, with a few suggestions from their elders, reproduce the landing of the Pilgrims, Robinson Crusoe's varied experiences, parts of *Pilgrim's Progress*, processions in celebration of famous events, while an attack from Indians, succeeded by marvellous hair-breadth escapes, is a fine climax to an hour or two of more quiet sport.

Scissors, paper and pencils proved so fascinating to two little girls that their mother had to deprive them of these pleasures until the happy thought occurred to her to offer them as a reward as follows: for every three-quarters of an hour's play in the open air there was given one-quarter of an hour with the coveted possessions.

In warm weather all of the material mentioned in the list can be used out-of-doors. One of my dreams is that some day our houses may be so constructed that, in addition to piazza space, the roofs can be utilized, and we may be able in mod-

## AMUSEMENTS

erate climates literally to eat and sleep, work and play outdoors for seven or eight months in the year. It is impossible to ventilate the average dwelling so thoroughly that the air is as pure as that under the open sky. Adults continually forget this, with unfavorable results to themselves and the children entrusted to their care.

Mothers should guard their children from nervous exhaustion, a form of fatigue which often manifests itself after concentration on the part of the child either in play or work. Its chief indications are languor, indifference or irritability. Children should not be allowed to do for any length of time work which requires much concentration, and should be taught how to relax. This is an easy thing to accomplish and is of the utmost importance for children of a highly strung, nervous temperament. Have the child lie flat on the floor, if there are no draughts, or on a bed or couch, then encourage him to stretch, wriggle, twist and roll just as a young kitten might. In a moment or so the child usually yawns and continues to yawn at intervals until the lungs are filled with fresh air and the face assumes a bright, animated expression. Ten minutes of such re-

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laxation is almost a certain cure for irritability unless it be caused by errors in diet, tight clothing or some serious physical derangement. Little children seldom drink sufficient water between meals, and it would be well to train them to take the relaxing exercises two or three times daily and to follow them invariably with a drink of water.

A love of Nature can be implanted in the mind of the youngest child. A beautiful sunset gives pleasure to the tiniest tot whose attention is directed to it, and I have known such a one call all the members of a household together to witness the western splendor. To love flowers, trees, brooks and all the wonders of Nature is one of the main things for a child to learn at an early age. Science and analysis should have no special part in his education at this time.

Habits of neatness and order can be taught children through the care of their toys, games and other amusement material; they should, as far as practical, have each his own pencils, scissors, paper, paint, paste, brushes, etc., and should be held responsible for them. Individual ownership prevents much friction, and in case of loss

## AMUSEMENTS

or injury properly places the responsibility. Children should have places assigned them where they can keep their belongings; shelves, hooks and drawers low enough for them to reach easily.

Two little girls of my acquaintance were made radiantly happy by an expenditure of sixty cents and a day's sewing; the result was two quaint little gowns made of remnants of flowered chintz, one blue and the other pink. They were simply made with long trains and flowing sleeves, and in them the children have masqueraded as imaginary queens and princesses to their heart's content. They have had a sense of *noblesse oblige* early impressed upon them so that their manners are almost perfect on the days they play at royalty.

## CHAPTER III

### FEAR, ANXIETY AND GRIEF

That health is essential to happiness and success in life is self-evident. Under unfavorable conditions a child with a fine inherited constitution may develop into a fairly good physical specimen of manhood or womanhood, but the questions are: First, how much better would have been the result if the conditions had been favorable? and, second, what becomes of those who are handicapped from birth with tendencies toward various weaknesses?

The consensus of opinion in the present age is that the best basis for spiritual, moral and intellectual growth is a sound and healthy body, and toward its attainment our best efforts should be directed.

The three chief sources of nourishment are thought, air and food. I place thought first since the other two agencies cannot properly perform their work if the mind is in a perturbed state.

## FEAR, ANXIETY AND GRIEF

Up to a certain point the highest medical authorities admit the power of mind over the body. Happiness and a cheerful environment are most beneficent in their influence, while reliable instances are recorded of the fatal effects of fear, anxiety or grief. If these three distressing states of mentality can in their extreme manifestation produce results so disastrous, it is reasonable to suppose that their presence in daily life, though in a lesser degree, tends to rob the body of much of its vitality and power of resistance to disease. Ninety-nine out of every hundred adults one meets can tell of some childish terror which held them in its clutches for weeks, months, even years, and many a child of imaginative temperament lies awake at night after the light is out, peopling the darkness with shadowy shapes, and cuddling under the bed-clothes until sleep brings troubled dreams.

When real danger, grief or anxiety confronts an adult, it would be heartless either to laugh at or ignore him, but it would be positively inhuman to chastise him, and yet such treatment under similar circumstances is constantly accorded children by unwise parents. That the child's danger

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is imaginary, that his grief will soon be assuaged, that his anxiety is about a trifle, you know, but he does not; they are real to him, and he is as worthy, and oftentimes as much in need of an intelligent sympathy and affection, as though he were lying on a bed of physical illness. Always lead a child to tell fully what his fear is; question him closely as to its origin, whether it be from something heard, read or seen, and then lovingly, by all the arts in your power, show him, step by step, the groundlessness of it. If it be a case in which darkness is a factor, tell him you are quite willing to leave the light until he has gone to sleep, provided he promises to keep his face turned away from it. After a few nights the chances are that he will permit you to place the light in an adjoining room or hallway, with the door left open, and in time, with judicious treatment, he will often of his own accord dispense with the light altogether.

Tell the child about the flowers, the ferns, the grass and trees, how they must have the darkness in which to grow, of the birds and insects which are all sleeping out in the night, and, if practicable, place the bed where the child can see

## FEAR, ANXIETY AND GRIEF

the moon and stars from his pillow. Then, sometime, if you are in the country, away from street lamps, take the child out on the piazza some specially dark night, and after a few reassuring hand clasps, play a little game in which you are to find each other by the sound of your voices, all the while making your own as merry as possible, and darting hither and thither so fast that he loses, in the familiarity of the play spirit, all sense of awe and mystery.

I have enlarged upon the fear of darkness because so many children suffer from it and because its effects upon the physical nature of the child, through its nervous system, are so damaging. A sensitive child has an unspeakable dread of whippings and harsh scoldings, and fear of this punishment is also very harmful, but its effects are usually transient.

Another form of fear is superstition. I have seen a child of eight years turn deathly pale upon breaking a small mirror. Questioning developed the fact that her mother and others had repeatedly, in her presence, referred to the dire consequences of such an accident. How different the home influence of another little girl, who, when



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she had broken her doll's mirror, and was for the instant an object of commiseration by her companions because of the evils which would overtake her for the next seven years, tossed her dainty head, and said with childish scorn, "I'm sorry I broke my mirror, but I'm not afraid, for Mamma and Papa say that that is all stuff and nonsense."

The fear of insects, animals, storms, lightning, and of numerous other every-day objects, is early inculcated through the conduct of adults, who, either from lack of self-control or ignorance of the mischief they are doing, act in such a manner as to alarm the children about them.

Fear is often directly traceable to stories which have been told a child by his companions, by superstitious nurse-maids or, most unpardonable of all, to conversations about witchcraft, burglars, disasters on sea and land, fires, floods, etc., held in his presence by the elders of his own and other households. A child who, to all appearances, has paid no attention to a conversation, will sometimes electrify an audience by repeating a part of it at a most inopportune moment.

A little girl who heard a vivid account of a

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shipwreck was unhappy for months in consequence, and the mere mention of the ocean caused her to shudder. A little boy, on hearing of a river which had overflowed its banks and washed away houses and cattle, for weeks went to bed in a state of trepidation, lest the brook in his yard should overflow and destroy his home and all its inmates.

Until a child's reasoning faculties are developed through contact with fact and experience, the odds are tremendously against him in his battle with fear, and it is a duty wisely and tenderly to help him in this, as in other processes of his development. The "hardening" method is no more justifiable in this than in other directions, and it is unreasonable to look for great courage, or even an average amount of that quality, in a boy whose childhood has been imbued with fear. Caution has an important place in the training of a child, but it is never to be confounded with fear.

If conscience does, indeed, make cowards of us all, fear begets abject slavery, and the most of its fetters, alas! are forged in childhood, often by those who would sacrifice their lives, if need

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be, for the children committed to their care. To childish grief we should give the same loving sympathy that we would give to real grief in any other phase of life. It is a mistake to repress tears or sobs which arise from such a cause; it is far better to let the child "cry it out" unless the current of his thoughts can be turned in another direction. Self-control is an admirable thing, but to exact too much of it in very young children is unduly to tax their nervous systems, and to lessen their powers of endurance at maturity. Childish anxiety may arise from many causes, and is not to be scolded away any more than one would scold at a fever. One of the chief causes is anxiety about lessons, and upon this point I shall have something to say in a later paper.

Consciousness of defects in their own early training should render parents quick to avoid them with their own children, and to be warned as well by the mistakes of others. We should rejoice in the hope that each generation may be further advanced in every way than the one which has preceded it, a consummation which rests not alone with parents and educators, but with all humanity.

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The adult who manifests malice, envy, hypocrisy, uncharitableness, cynicism or a spirit of criticism in the presence of children is desecrating sacred ground and is sowing seed which may yield in them a harvest of physical ills, as well as evil propensities. The more highly organized and delicate the child, the more sensitive is he to mental discord in his environment, and I have known children to look very serious and heave weary sighs upon the close of some unpleasant argument, or altercation among their elders, to which they have been witnesses.

Reading or telling stories of brave deeds to children is an excellent means of instilling them with courage, while by constantly leading them to dwell upon the good and beautiful in life and literature, their minds will be so filled with helpful and inspiring thoughts that there will be left no room for mental concepts of a demoralizing order.

If it is true that a certain quality of thought produces unfavorable physical results, it is equally true that certain other qualities are highly beneficial; for instance, hopeful, joyous anticipation of some pleasant event is a good tonic and can

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be used with admirable effect in the case of phlegmatic children, but must be judiciously employed by those whose children are of a sanguine, nervous or excitable temperament. In the latter instance loss of appetite and sleep often occurs until the promised pleasure is secured, to be followed in turn by more or less exhaustion. For these and other reasons it is better not to make plans very far ahead for children's pleasure, or at least not to notify them of what it is proposed to do.

✓ A child must have a large measure of love in his environment, just as plants need the sunlight, if he is to attain the highest physical and mental development of which he is capable. I have seen a dull, dispirited-looking child brighten up wonderfully after an affectionate little frolic with one of the elders of the family. Simple amusements, merry, innocent little jokes, much laughter, with its attendant involuntary relaxation of muscles and nerves, all play a most important part in the upbuilding of a good constitution.

Parents should take time to manifest their love for their children in caresses and endearing

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phrases. Such time could not be better spent. This is neither spoiling nor indulging a child, but is giving him that which is his by divine right and which we are the richer for giving. It is as unreasonable to deprive a child of this mental joy with its direct physical benefit, as it would be to refuse him nourishing food.

## CHAPTER IV

### FRESH AIR AND GOOD RESPIRATION

"The breath is the life!" Man can live for a time without food, drink or raiment, but deprive him of air for a few seconds only, and death is the inevitable result. "As free as air!" How often we hear the phrase; and yet, judging from the poorly ventilated houses, buildings and cars, one might think it a precious commodity, which must be hoarded and used over and over again until it has lost its life-giving quality and become a menace to the health of those who inhale it. Much has been said and written in regard to the importance of proper ventilation; yet on all sides people are literally starving for that which is theirs for the taking.

There are many parents who are very solicitous concerning their children's diet, clothing and associates and yet are grossly negligent on the equally important question of the air they breathe. The children themselves are so helpless in this matter;

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they tell us when they are hungry, thirsty or cold, but though they suffer from the effects of vitiated air they know not the cause of their discomfort, and, in many cases, it is only when their flushed faces and irritability appeal to the tardy notice of parent or nurse that the child is sent out for a "little fresh air," or the nursery window is raised an inch or two.

While it is important that children should be trained to habits of neatness in the care of their skin, teeth, hair and nails, it is of even greater moment that their attention be directed to the necessity for internal cleanliness. The simplest way with children is always the best. When very young they are easily reached through their sympathies, and one mother obtained satisfactory results by simply telling her children that their lungs were like little bellows which could not work properly when their shoulders were stooped over. She explained that they had to pump in the good air and pump out the bad, that their bodies might grow strong and they might keep well and happy. When she saw them in bad postures she said, "Poor little bellows, it is having such a hard time ;



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it cannot do its work because you have squeezed it all out of shape."

In like manner she referred to the alimentary canal as "the good housekeeper inside them who used up all that part of their food which would nourish their bodies, and cast out the rest as soon as it was useless." This waste she described as "trash," and, having told them how hard the little housekeeper worked, she asked them always to be ready to help her by instantly attending to Nature's calls, and impressed them with the fact that in no better way could they aid this faithful housekeeper. She also often spoke of their lungs as being hungry for fresh air, adding that no one in the world could feed those little lungs but themselves. This kind of physiology proved most effective.

As children grow older it may interest them to study the structure and location of the lungs and their function, but scientific analysis is beyond the comprehension of young children, and they do not need such knowledge in order to learn to breathe correctly and to love pure air.

At all times we should set our children the example of erect posture. Richard Timberg, of

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Stockholm, says, "The mechanism of breathing is impeded in its action by the leaning posture. The most important inspiratory muscle in the body is the diaphragm, the flat muscle which divides the chest from the abdomen. In leaning forward the abdomen is compressed, and the movement of the diaphragm hindered, causing the act of inhalation to become less deep, and the whole breathing shallow and inefficient. The action of the heart, as well as that of breathing, is disturbed, and the internal organs become overcharged with sluggishly flowing blood to the detriment of their activity. The development of the organs of breathing receives a marked check from lack of bodily exercise. When, during the years of growth, day after day for hours at a stretch, the act of breathing is performed with subdued power, superficially and feebly, without a full expansion of lungs and chest, a poor development of these organs ensues, resulting in a flat, sunken, and immobile chest. This is a sign of weakness in those parts which may even indicate a tendency to lung diseases. The sluggish circulation through the abdominal organs, caused by their compressed condition when the body is contin-

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ually bent forward, is, no doubt, very often solely responsible for many a school-child's persistent indigestion."

Also, in regard to the correct method of respiration, it is important that the child be instructed to breathe through the nose at all times. Should he sleep with his mouth open, his nose and throat should be examined, as he may have adenoid growths. Mothers and nurses should use the greatest vigilance in this direction, always firmly pressing an infant's and children's lips together with the fingers, and noting frequently, through the daily naps, the position of the mouth. Where the habit of mouth-breathing persists in spite of such supervision and correction, and in the absence of adenoid growths, it becomes advisable to use a mechanical device for holding the mouth closed. I have seen such an appliance made of canvas straps, which proved very effectual. It was simple in construction, easily laundered, and a child could quickly learn to adjust it.

Pure air is one of the most powerful nervous sedatives and tonics. Children who are inclined to be restless and given to insomnia will often quickly fall into refreshing slumber if, after

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abundant covering has been placed over them, the windows in the sleeping-room are left open for about ten minutes. In this connection I would remind readers that children, when not in bed and well covered, should always be removed from an apartment which is being aired by having all the windows opened. Sir James Clark remarks that were he to select the two circumstances which, more than any others, influence health during the growth of the body, "they would be the proper adaptation of food to difference of age and constitution, and the constant supply of pure air for respiration."

An authority has said that every time we breathe we spoil at least half a barrel of air, or six hundred barrels every hour. Surely it behooves us to use every means in our power to prevent the contamination of this marvellous, life-giving substance.

To dwell upon the source of the water supply, the character of the food, the amount of exercise requisite for health, to the exclusion of the vital topic of proper ventilation, is like buying a costly stove, purchasing the best fuel, starting a fire, then, after exhausting the air from the room in

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which the stove is placed, expecting the fire to burn. The body requires oxygen as much as the fire, and life in the open air not only gives keener appetite but greatly increases the assimilative power of the digestive organs, which, in turn, nourish every part of the human structure.

To a certain extent we can control the matter of ventilation in our own homes, but until the public generally is fully aroused to the importance of the subject, we must suffer the consequences of breathing the vitiated air of poorly constructed or overheated and overcrowded school rooms, churches and public buildings, as well as railway and electric cars and other vehicles of transportation.

I mention the schools first, for where there is, or seems to be, a fairly adequate method of ventilation, it often falls short of its purpose, because of the overcrowding of many of the grades. Then, too, schools are the buildings most frequented by children. There is no subject more worthy of the careful study of parents than the hygiene of the schools, and not until they have given this matter the attention it merits can they bring to the teacher's aid, in his efforts for im-

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proved conditions, the coöperation of strong, enlightened public opinion.

The following are a few precautionary measures for keeping the atmosphere of dwellings pure and free from dust :

The use of stained floors and rugs in preference to carpets. The cleanest and most healthful floor for the sleeping-room is that which is stained, without polish of any kind save that produced by time.

A thorough daily airing of each room.

Let clothing be shaken every other day, at least, from an open window or, better still, an upper piazza, and when feasible let it be brushed out-of-doors.

Clothing worn during the day should not remain in the bedroom at night.

Daily airing and occasional beating of mattresses and blankets.

Open war against the feather duster.

A dry cellar at all times.

Frequent inspection of the plumbing.

No vessels containing soiled water should be left uncovered in the bedroom. There should be

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in those rooms as little furniture as is compatible with comfort.

A screen is almost a necessity, as children should never sleep either in a draught or with the wind blowing directly on them.

In very cold weather, if the sleeping-room has two or three windows the chances are that it will be adequately supplied with fresh air when one of the windows is opened from top and bottom half an inch. Extremely cold air is a powerful disinfectant, and large quantities of it stream continuously through windows which have not been fitted with weather strips. Only the severest climates justify weather strips; it is far better to burn a little more fuel and economize elsewhere, than to seal up the windows and doors. Of course, in moderate weather more outside air may be admitted to the sleeping-room. If the night be damp and cold it is better to open the window in an adjoining room. The vitality is lower in sleeping than in waking hours, and especial care should be exercised in ventilating the apartments of young children. The bed covering should not be heavy; it should consist of soft and warm blankets with a light cotton coverlet and in cold

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weather a lightweight woolen or cotton comfortable, or eiderdown.

The sheet and blankets may be secured to the mattress on each side of the bed; if they are not pinned tightly across the child, there is little danger that the bed-clothes will be torn.

Illuminating gas is a vitiator of the the atmosphere, and as little as possible should be used in the nursery. As foul air will creep from lower to upper rooms, it is not advisable to have the nursery over rooms which are occupied during the evening and in which gas will necessarily be burning. The ideal exposure for a nursery is toward the south; this location admits an abundance of sunlight, and in no other room in the house are its benefits so necessary. Get all the sunlight into your house that you can; keep the nursery shades up to the ceiling the greater part of the day. If you cannot have a southern exposure, then try for an eastern one; if this is impracticable, take a western one. If you live in a city house where the nursery has only one or two hours of sunlight a day, make the most of it while it is there, and let no curtains impede its rays.



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An open fireplace is an excellent ventilator, but it establishes a draught the moment the door or window is opened, and young children playing about the floor should be protected from its effects.

## CHAPTER V

### COÖPERATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

The closer the contact between parent and teacher, the better for the child. We are all more or less conscious of this truth, but comparatively few, either among the great mass of parents or the teachers, make a definite attempt to secure systematic coöperation.

With the present crowded conditions of the public schools it is impossible for teachers to have individual acquaintance with the parents and home environment of the pupils. The teacher of a primary grade of sixty, for example, is taxed to the utmost, physically and mentally, to meet the demand made upon her during the school hours. She needs some rest and recreation during the afternoons, and she certainly cannot be expected to devote that time to visiting the homes of her pupils. The majority of teachers in the public schools are already overworked, and, to my mind, their salaries are by no means commensurate with the service rendered.

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I have unlimited faith in the wisdom of posterity and of my contemporaries whose efforts are directed toward the realization of educational ideals; but it is with present conditions that we have to deal, and the question is: How can we bring parents and teachers into closer relations with each other? The busiest mother, when she comprehends the importance of such coöperation, will surely find or make time to visit the school that her children attend. She can thus meet the teacher and familiarize herself with the school and its surroundings. The faulty construction of many school buildings, with defective plumbing and inadequate facilities for lighting, ventilating and heating, is as strongly deplored by the thoughtful teacher as by the observant parent, and the only redress is in the education of local public opinion, with its subsequent expression at the ballot box. The citizens of every community should see that the municipal officers exercise no false economy where the welfare of its youth and children is at stake.

I wonder how many parents who read this volume have visited the schools that their children attend. If you have not already done so, may I,

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on behalf of your children, urge that you do it at once; and may I make a further request, viz.: that when you have gone, you will send me a letter or postal, stating as briefly as possible the results of your visit. Nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand teachers will be glad to see you and will be encouraged by your interest. The Parents' and Teachers' Unions, which have been organized in various parts of the country, probably offer the most effective means of bringing the teachers and parents together *en masse*. The National Congress of Mothers has published a small pamphlet entitled, *How to Organize Parents' Auxiliaries in Public Schools*, with suggestions for programmes for mothers' clubs and parents' meetings. It cannot fail to prove helpful to those who may already belong to some such association, or to those who may desire to effect such an organization in their town or city.

For the sake of illustration and suggestion, let us assume that we are present at a large gathering of parents and teachers, assembled especially for the purpose of being interrogated. The following list of questions, with the exception of a few

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interpolations, I have taken from a book prepared by Stuart H. Rowe, Ph. D., *The Physical Nature of the Child and how to Study It*. It is comprehensive, clear and concise, and nothing better of its kind has come under my observation. It is a simple matter to determine where the responsibility should rest for the answers to these questions:

Have you made any effort to learn all that you can concerning the heredity of the child?

FOOD.—Is the food eaten by the child simple, varied, well cooked; eaten slowly, well masticated, easily digested, taken at regular times? Where lunches are used, are they simple and nourishing?

CLOTHING AND CARE OF SKIN.—Is the underclothing changed at least once a week? Is the underclothing changed at night? Does the child wear an overcoat or other warm wrap, even when the cold is not extreme? Are the chest and legs well protected except in Summer? Does he or she depend upon the waist rather than the shoulders for the support of clothing? Does he change or dry his shoes when he gets his feet wet? Does he bathe all over at least twice a week? Does he

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bathe in water that is neither too warm nor too cold?

**AIR.**—Does the child always breathe through the nose? Is there anything but accidental provision for fresh air in sleeping and living room? Are the furniture and floors kept clean and free from dust? Is the plumbing often inspected? Is the cellar dry both in Summer and Winter?

**EXERCISE.**—Is the child allowed to go out, bundled up, in cold weather, and not kept in for fear of taking cold? Does he come in before he gets chilled? How much time does he spend in exercise? How much of it is in free play? How much of it is out-of-doors?

**SLEEP.**—A child from six to eight years old should get eleven or twelve hours of sleep. A child from twelve to fourteen years should get nine or ten hours' sleep. Does he get that amount? Does he sleep free from draughts? With access to fresh air? Where it is only moderately cold? Before going to bed does he eat only food easily digested? Does he go to bed free from mental excitement or anxiety?

**MISCELLANEOUS.**—Has the child the habit of regularly evacuating the bowels? Is he generally

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strong enough to do the work of the school easily? If there are days when he is not strong enough, are they rare? Is he free from any noticeable hereditary or early acquired physical weakness? Does he refrain from the use of tobacco? Does he always secure the best possible light when reading? Is he careful never to read lying on the floor or couch, or by the firelight or twilight, or with his book shaded? Is almost all of his reading in books with good, clear print? Does he avoid facing a lamp or other bright light while reading or talking?

Are the child's ears kept free from accumulation of wax? After an attack of measles, scarlet fever or catarrh, has he escaped without suffering from discharge of the ear or from deafness? Have you been careful to have him examined at intervals by competent specialists after these diseases? Is he encouraged to quickness and accuracy of movement at home in any positive way? Are games of various sorts played at home? Does he always hear carefully enunciated English at home? Is any attempt made to help the child to correctness in his English?

Is the child free from all sorts of worry outside

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of school? Is he kept from too frequent emotional excitement of all sorts—theatres, parties, etc.? Does he sleep dreamlessly? Does he rarely get over fatigued? At home does he stand straight and take good postures when sitting? Is he careful to walk erect and with a springy gait?

How far should the average child see ordinary writing on the blackboard? Are you sure every child in your class can see every portion of the blackboard distinctly? How near and how far from the eye should the book be held? How large must type be in order to be used by the child with perfect safety? How many square feet of floor will one square foot of window light up under average conditions? Does your school-room meet that requirement?

How much school work should the average child be able to accomplish at different ages without indications of fatigue? What are the most evident signs of fatigue? What form of chair and desk is most desirable? Do you treat all children exactly alike in the degree of precision required? Do you make any allowance for different dispositions? Do you know the amount of



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work, mental or manual, done by the child outside of school?

Has each child been taught at home the principles of hygiene most essential for health? Have you tried to find out the cause of pallor in the faces of your pupils, of unusual irritability or supersensitiveness? Are you conscious of the special needs of the adolescent period? Do you make health of primary importance in the education of your children?

To these a hundred more questions might easily be added, and it would be better for all concerned if parents and teachers were able to answer them.

Even an occasional perusal of such a list is helpful to the most careful of parents and teachers, since there are so many, many things to be borne continually in mind concerning the child's three-fold development. Many children are shy and sensitive, and in consequence are easily misunderstood by teachers and companions. The amount of suffering endured by such children is entirely disproportionate to the cause, and much of it may be avoided if the mothers of these children will, on their entrance to school, have a few minutes'

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quiet talk with the teacher, telling her as concisely as possible something of the child's temperament. The wise teacher will make note of this report for future use. She will learn to make due allowance for maternal pride or undue maternal severity, and by means of this interview with the mother will, in addition to the verbal information received, gain an insight into the home training and environment of her young pupil which will prove invaluable to her later.

Parents and teachers should uphold each other in authority, and differences of opinion should be settled between them. The condemnation of a teacher or his or her methods in the child's presence, without very grave cause, is unfair to the teacher and demoralizing to the child. On the other hand, it is often a source of irritation to an overworked teacher to be taken personally to task by sensitive, over-indulgent or ignorant parents; but where the child's interests are at stake, adults should be willing, if need be, to sacrifice themselves. It is only through sacrifice and reverent study that child nature will be fully revealed and understood.

There is one thing indispensable to the highest

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development of the child, and that is coöperation between the mother and the teacher. The mother can give the teacher much information concerning the child which will enable her the more quickly and fully to comprehend the physical and mental make-up of the little being committed to her care, while the teacher in turn often sees possibilities or defects which even watchful parents overlook.

## CHAPTER VI

### OBEDIENCE AND PUNISHMENT

Behind the universe is law; the existence of law presupposes obedience and punishment; nevertheless, such questions as: What constitutes true obedience and how is it best obtained? and, Is punishment justifiable, and if so, when and how? have been at times veritable storm centres of the Child Study movement.

We are, doubtless, all agreed that obedience is necessary to the child's well-being and essential to the harmony of the home. It is the methods whereby these results are attained which give rise to the diversity of opinion.

It is in the first three years of a child's life that the habit of obedience is most easily inculcated. If parents would only bear this in mind they would save themselves much needless friction and anxiety. The wee toddler, just beginning to walk and talk, is quick to detect the difference between the voice of authority and that of irresolute command. We are all familiar with the mischievous

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little sprite who stands with outstretched hand, ready to touch some prohibited object, and whose eyes clearly question the seriousness of mamma's "Baby mustn't touch." It is a comparatively easy matter to control a young child if one begins in the right way.

An important feature in the training of children is never to make useless prohibitions, or to say *don't* unless you have a reason for it. It does not follow that you should necessarily always give a very young child your reason. The reasoning faculties of very young children are undeveloped, and it is as unwise to force them in this as in other directions. As one author puts it, "The child must learn to obey clear and definite words before he can obey abstract ideals. We may not have more innate wisdom than the child, but at least we have more experience, and it is right that the child should profit by that which we have."

I believe in giving reasons as early as one can, but in matters of nursery discipline the child must early be taught to obey because he is told to do so. The child's needs in connection with his physical well-being are much the same from day to day, while his wishes are subject to many variations.

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The child who refuses anything but sweets at a meal should be allowed to go hungry until the next regular meal hour, when he will usually develop a normal appetite. The child who will not be bathed, if perfectly well, should not be dressed. When he sees his little brothers and sisters going out for the morning walk he will change his mind; but nurse should then tell him gently but firmly that she is very sorry she had not time to dress him, and that he will have to wait until she brings the baby in for its nap, just before luncheon. There will be tears and possibly tantrums, but it is not probable that he will ever again refuse to be bathed or dressed.

I am personally opposed to corporal punishment of any kind, but I am frequently told there are children who can be controlled only through fear of physical pain in the form of corporal punishment. This may be true in rare instances, but I am inclined to believe that in the majority of cases the failure in management is due to a lack in the parents themselves of self-control and knowledge of temperament and child nature, rather than to any abnormality in the child.

A chief cause of disobedience among children is

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the unreasonableness of many of the restrictions imposed upon them. Healthy, vigorous children are overflowing with energy and animal spirits, and these must have a natural outlet unless the child is to be positively injured through repression, or through the continual friction which is sure to follow unnatural conditions.

A child should never be punished for its misfortunes: a torn dress, a broken dish or vase, an overturned pitcher or ink bottle, all these things are in the nature of accidents and may befall an adult as well as a child. There should be an expression of regret, but not reproach, a careful pointing out of the inconvenience and loss occasioned to others, and an opportunity made for apology, and, as far as practicable, restoration. A frequent recurrence of such accidents indicates either a heedlessness which must be met with some form of discipline, or a nervousness which may be due to physical causes and which should be investigated. I have seen a child harshly spoken to and humiliated by dismissal from the table because of an upset tumbler of water; embarrassment and nervousness (there were several strangers present) were clearly the cause of the accident

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in this case. A child who is habitually careless in such matters may be shown how unpleasant such accidents are to others, and in consequence be placed at a side table for a few days as a means of discipline, but he should never be so treated in the presence of guests. To reprove a child at such times causes him pain out of all proportion to his offence and lessens his self-respect.

Who has not seen a mother admonish her child severely for some trivial offence, and in the next moment retail some bit of scandal or gossip or express some misleading, unjust judgment of another, thereby seriously erring through choice, where the child's omission, in all probability, was one of thoughtlessness alone.

Children should be led to confess their faults and should be tenderly dealt with at such times. Self-protection is the first law of Nature, and it is unreasonable to expect the child to confess to the breaking of a piece of bric-à-brac or any other accident or wrong-doing when he knows a whipping or other severe punishment awaits his confession.

One of the simplest ways of insuring obedience to law and a willingness to accept the discipline



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which aids in the establishment of right habit and thought is by a continual direction of the child's mind to the rights of others. If he has broken his companion's toys he should replace them with his own, not because he will punish himself thereby, but because his little friend would have to do without them on account of his carelessness, and that would not be *right*. The application of the principles of justice, simple justice, is, in the daily lives of children, a powerful factor in character building.

In the training of children there is a happy medium between extreme sentimentalism and undue severity; the former method construes liberty into license, and the child becomes an autocrat who is scarcely permitted an opportunity to practice self-control or consideration for others, while the effects of undue severity upon his moral development are obvious.

In punishing children the difference between penalty and discipline should be kept in mind. Penalty is the inevitable price demanded by broken law, and though it may teach knowledge by experience, it does not necessarily develop the moral nature of the child. True discipline is cor-

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rective and, when given by either parent or teacher in wisdom and a spirit of love, tends to strengthen the will of the child to desire the good and to avoid the evil. Choose, of course, the discipline which leads and directs rather than that which threatens and coerces through fear.

I have in mind an instance in which both penalty and discipline had a part. A young child of about two and a half years had a very bad habit of biting her sister, a year older, on the arm. The older child had an unusually sweet spirit of non-resistance, and though she would scream with pain, made no effort at retaliation. When remonstrated with and shown the marks of her teeth in her sister's arm, the little culprit would appear insensible of having been naughty and never manifested the slightest contrition, though for other misdemeanors she would quite frequently say, "Baby is sorry." After spitting her little hands smartly several times without avail, her mother finally determined upon a plan, the application of which effected an immediate and permanent cure of the biting habit. The next time baby nipped her little sister's arm, her mother instantly bit her quite sharply in the spot on her arm identical

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with that on her little sister's. Her amazement can better be imagined than described; she gave an astonished, grieved glance at her mother, and then burying her face on her shoulder, she burst into a flood of tears. Very lovingly her mother showed her the red marks on her little sister's arm and then pointing to the spot on her own, said over and over "That is the way baby hurts poor little sister when she bites her. Mamma is so sorry, but mamma had to show baby how it hurts, so she would not hurt little sister any more." The pain inflicted was the penalty the individual must suffer who breaks the law and infringes upon the rights of others; the discipline was the awakening by such a means the child's consciousness of the suffering she had caused her little sister, of whom, in her baby way, she was very fond.

Children's rights should not interfere with the rights of others, and the sooner they learn that most important lesson the better parents and citizens will they in turn become. Our obligations to them are limitless, and recognizing this fact we are willing to make untold sacrifices for them, but there is a point where self-sacrifice ceases to be a virtue, when it reacts to the detriment of its ob-

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ject, and beyond this point the most loving parent has no right to pass.

So much has been written on the "don'ts" and "mustn'ts," two of the biggest bugbears of childhood, that it seems needless to refer to them here beyond reminding readers that it is one of the worst forms of nagging, and we all know that nagging is, at every stage of life, not only unendurable but demoralizing.

You cannot punish a child into being good. Submission may be gained, but at a dear price, for if the punishment have an element of injustice in it (as it, alas, frequently has) the memory of it oftentimes rankles in a child's mind and may bear the bitter fruit of resentment for years to come. The parent who tries, in imagination, to put himself in the child's place will give no needless commands, and will never allow himself to punish a child or fix a penalty when he is under the influence of anger or impatience. Reverence for God's laws, love, sympathy and confidence between parents and children, are the watch-fires which should be kept burning in every home.

## CHAPTER VII

### INDIVIDUALITY

Webster defines individuality as "the character or property appropriate or peculiar to an individual; that quality which distinguishes one person or thing from another; the sum of characteristic traits; distinctive character; as, 'he is a person of marked *individuality*.'"

Not even the most superficial observer of children can fail to see the great differences which exist among them even at an early age. While the physical characteristics are so marked that in a world full of children we can recall no two that are exactly alike, the mental characteristics are even more varied, and we often see in a family of children that exactly the same training will produce entirely different results. This is because of the difference in temperament—that wonderful quality which differentiates one child from another, which is born with him, follows him through life, is with him at death; this quality

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which is, as it were, the soul, the vital centre from which radiates the child's individuality.

Since very wise people have decided that temperament may be modified, but never eradicated, it is of supreme importance to the child that his temperament should become a subject of reverent study to those in whose charge he is placed, be they parents or teachers. But alas, this, which should be the universal attitude of mind toward the child, is the exception. The same punishments, rewards or appeals are meted out to each child alike, without the slightest regard to his individuality or temperament.

If children could be trained as parrots can, then some of our present educational methods would take front rank, and the educational mills which literally grind the children out and tag the product with the trademark "Educated" would be worthy of our deep respect. But children are not parrots, and people are everywhere awakening to the fact that the word *educated* has a broader, deeper significance than we have hitherto attached to it.

We say of one child, he is a born optimist; of another, he is a pessimist; one is naturally honest, frank, another secretive, deceitful; one is born

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without fear, another is a coward from birth; one is naturally sunny, forgiving, another is morose, revengeful; one amiable, another highly irritable—and so on throughout the entire category of human characteristics. In young children these attributes are tendencies only; they have not become fixed habits, but they supply the material from which character and habit are built.

So to understand the child's individuality or temperament that it can be utilized, is the knowledge the adults about him should be most eager to obtain. A case comes to mind of a little girl who showed at a very early age great sympathy for everything about her. Her father was a man with an unusually high sense of justice, and her mother was by nature intensely sympathetic. On one occasion this little girl and her little sister, who lived in the country, were seen by their mother walking very slowly down a long path leading to the road, bent almost double, holding each a fat little hand very close to the ground. The mother, who was busy packing, preparatory to her departure with the children for the seashore that afternoon, gave no further thought to the incident, until an hour or so later she had

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occasion to go down the path, and was surprised to see a long zig-zag line of something which at first glance appeared to be chalk or powder but which the little girl explained was "crackers all pounded up fine, Mamma; we did not want the little ants to be hungry while we were away, and so we got the crackers and mashed them up. You know bread-crumbs are nice for little birds, but I think they are too big for such weenie things as ants, don't you, Mamma?"

This child's mother makes no effort to repress her sympathy, but she is endeavoring as the little girl grows older to have her life so full of normal, childish activities that the sympathy, which might under some circumstances become a morbid abnormality, finds a happy outlet in the innumerable gracious small services a little child can render. It would be a cruel perversion of God's intention to try to destroy or uproot such a sentiment from a child's nature because its possession may be a source of much suffering to him later on in life.

The individuality of a child should be not only respected but fostered. It is his divine birth-right, and although it may not be just what you or



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I would choose for him, yet it is his, and it is part of a plan and purpose too great for finite minds to criticize.

By respecting a child's individuality we find out much about him that we might never otherwise learn. While morbid introspection is always to be avoided, there is a self-study which can be made profitable to a comparatively young child. For instance, the child of violent temper, who can himself see its results, should be led to look within, to give heed to the thoughts and emotions which precede the angry words, the quick blow, or the tantrums into which he may throw himself. The mother of such a little boy, whom I know, occasionally takes opportunity from some passing circumstance to afford an outlet for the forces within by drawing his attention to some matter upon which he can vent an impersonal, righteous indignation. For example, the municipal authorities of the town in which he lives are extremely lax in the matter of street cleaning; papers and *débris* are allowed to collect and mar the appearance of what would otherwise be a very attractive village. The mother says to this little boy, who has been carefully trained as to *personal* respon-

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sibility in the matter of cleanliness, "I'm sure, my little son, when you are a man, and serve in the City Council, you will see that the laws are enforced and that we have a clean town."

See the flash of righteous indignation in the boyish eyes, note the straightening of the sturdy back at the words, "when you are a man"; the active brain has received an indelible impression, the emotional nature has found a legitimate vent for the time being, and there are nine chances out of ten that while such a mood is upon him his most irritating playfellow could hardly provoke him to wrath.

That mother recognizes a splendid force in that violent temper; she knows when it manifests itself through that channel it is but misdirected energy; that with training and a proper outlet it will be of royal service, not only to the child possessing it, but in maturer years to the world at large. She is training him to regard his temperament as a friend who will help him if he but use it rightly.

Individuality is not a tangible thing; it is of the spirit, and as such it can be better felt than described. As far as possible we should let children be themselves; we should encourage sim-

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plicity and frankness in them by that best of all teachers, example. In matters pertaining to their material surroundings and possessions they should be allowed as much freedom as is consistent with the rights of others.

Give the child permission to pin pictures about the nursery wall, and watch the choice he makes from the good though simple collection you should have at hand. Do not even offer a suggestion in such matters. Note the child's attitude at play with other children. Does he insist always upon being leader, or is he willing cheerfully to "take his turn?" Note carefully his preference in games. Does he like to take chances, or is he unduly cautious?

If he has odd ways of expressing himself, do not criticize him, but rather rejoice that he gives some evidence of originality, however slight it may be. Watch with eager, observant eye for all marks of individuality, and then make use of such knowledge in the child's training.

Repression of individuality is apt to be succeeded by disastrous consequences, physical and mental. The fact that these consequences do not immediately manifest themselves renders the ulti-

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mate results none the less serious. The child reveals his internal life through his inclinations, emotions, powers of observation and thoughts, and the sympathetic, watchful parent who closely studies these manifestations of individuality holds the key to situations which would otherwise prove most perplexing. It behooves us, then, to encourage the child to *be himself* and not a temporary counterfeit of some other little boy or girl whom he has heard extolled.

One mother, who had been earnestly impressing upon her little son the importance of frankness, was quite surprised an hour or so afterward to hear him say to an afternoon caller, "I don't want to shake hands with you because I don't like you, but I suppose I'll have to, because mamma says it is only polite to speak to her visitors." This wise mother did not reprimand the little fellow, for she instantly divined his remark was the result of his point of view of what constituted frankness; dismissing him on some pleasant pretext, she explained the case to the slightly chagrined guest, who admitted rather shame-facedly that he had on a former occasion teased the boy's pet dog and had threatened to run away with it.

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That evening while sitting in the twilight, this discreet and tender mamma called her boy to her and said, "My dear, when Mamma told you to-day to be always frank and manly and to be *yourself*, she meant, to be your best self; now, that best self thinks of other people's feelings, does it not? and I think, my little son, you made Mr. Brown feel very uncomfortable to-day when you told him you did not like him. I'm very sure you did not mean to do anything wrong, but we can be honest and truthful and yet courteous." Patiently this mother explained as well as she could the difference between genuine frankness and unnecessary and brutal candor, for she realized it was a crisis in the child's life and one to be delicately yet firmly treated.

There are other mothers who would have sharply reprimanded the child in Mr. Brown's presence and meted out some punishment to him later, leaving the childish brain bewildered by its effort to reconcile conflicting precept and example. Such mothers, sad to say, have never realized the sacredness of a child's individuality or their responsibility concerning its protection and development.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHILD AWAY FROM HOME

Off for the Summer!

This phrase, which is heard on all sides at this season of the year, may hold for hundreds of children a world of joyful anticipation or the very reverse! A change of climate at any season is apt to prove beneficial, and to those families who live in large cities or in climates where the Summers are long and hot, it is of great advantage to the children if they can spend at least a part of the season in the mountains or at the seashore. But while there are advantages, there are also disadvantages connected with such an arrangement. Where the children of a family are of varying ages, say from twenty to eight, as is not infrequently the case, it is not an easy matter for people of moderate means to find a spot for their Summer sojourn which will meet all their requirements in the way of climate, surroundings and recreation for the older as well as the younger members of the family.

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The New England or Virginia farm, which would in many respects prove an ideal place for the juvenile portion of the family, affords scant opportunity for that social enjoyment and contact with travelled and cultivated people which is a valuable part of the education of girls and boys well on in their teens and which may be found in some of the numerous delightful mountain and seaside resorts. It is unquestionably true that many persons go away from home every Summer because it is fashionable, though to do so they commit an extravagance beyond their means, and are thereby forced to curtail their expenditures in educational and other vital matters. A Summer off is dearly purchased under such circumstances. The children of those who are so unwise as to pursue such a course are apt to derive little benefit from their outing, as the same lack of wisdom will be manifest in the choice of a resort, in the selection of the Summer wardrobe, in amusements, acquaintances, etc., so that the children are surrounded, in an even greater degree than at home, by an atmosphere of insincerity and straining after effect. These conditions are in a measure counteracted when at home

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by the school life, and, let us hope, a semblance at least of home duties.

The average child away from home is not in the environment best adapted to his mental, moral or physical nature. In the large boarding-houses and hotels he comes hourly into close contact with many diverse characters. He is the pet of one, an object of aversion to another, a subject for teasing amusement to a group of male loungers; one morning he is fondled and paraded by his superficial mamma, and the next morning when he waits around for a similar demonstration of approval he is called stupid and tedious (in the very midst of his admiring audience of the day before) and is ignominiously banished until luncheon with, "Nurse, take him away; keep him out of my sight until luncheon."

Nurse, perhaps, knows that something has gone wrong with mamma. The new gown which has just arrived is a disappointment; she is threatened with a sick headache, or she is simply in one of her "moods." But how is the childish mind to comprehend these phases of the mother's nature, or to adjust his point of view to meet the varying treatment accorded him in every direction?



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He is treated in every way *except* as an individual, as a human being with rights which are, in proportion to his own lack of perspective and training, all the more just and to be considered. The hotel clerk looks dubiously at him, the guests make impolite remarks concerning his advent, in his hearing; for reason of economy or convenience, or both, he takes his meals in the nurses' and children's dining-room, where the table talk is very likely not improving, and where his self-respect and individuality are further attacked. He is dressed two or three times a day, and often in garments starched so stiff as to render him hot and uncomfortable. His natural remonstrances are met with the assertion that he is "a naughty, bad boy, that he wants to wear dirty clothes and make his mamma and papa ashamed of him." Is it surprising that in an atmosphere of such unnatural restraint and so little sympathy, he should grow restive and kick out of the traces? He is unable to define in words his own feeling, but *for* him we would say that it seems as though every man's hand were against him, and if he be a healthy, active, normal child, he finds means of retaliating in his own way. The average adult

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has at best but a superficial knowledge and sympathy with the inner nature of childhood, and often denounces as badness some prank born of the pure mischief-loving spirit of the child.

The wise mother who is planning a Summer off for herself and children will bear in mind that occupation is as harmonizing a factor of daily life abroad as at home, and will take with her books and various other material which can be turned to account not only on rainy days, but during a part of each day. Absolute idleness, except in cases of nervous prostration (and fortunately childhood has thus far escaped that modern hydra-headed monster), bears, in my mind, the same relation to recreation that license does to liberty: one is bad, the other good; hence the children who have some slight task to perform throughout the Summer vacation derive more benefit from their vacation than those who are left wholly to their own devices. To read a few pages in some interesting and helpful book each day, to do a little mending or darning, to memorize some beautiful bit of verse or prose with Nature as the theme, to write an occasional letter to grandmother or favorite aunts and

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uncles, or the stay-at-home friends, to fill these letters with descriptions of the environment, and the daily life with its unusual adventures and activities, all these things are good for the child. Then there is the delightful study of the birds, of the trees, shrubs and flowers, of the section in which they are sojourning. These suggestions are for the child, not for the adolescent boy or girl who has been over-worked at school, and who should therefore be allowed to simply vegetate during his vacation.

Of all methods of spending a Summer none affords children quite so much pleasure as camping out, and if they are allowed a share in the domestic and other duties connected with the camp life, they not only find keen enjoyment in the homely tasks in their novel setting, but acquire much practical knowledge. The occasional discomforts of camp life, while rather trying to the majority of adults, furnish a fine means of discipline for the children, discipline which, though in a subtle form, is none the less effective in training the child to make light of annoyances which cannot be remedied, and to preserve the

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holiday spirit in the face of petty physical disturbances or domestic upsets.

I heard once of a wise woman who, being weary of the unending task of keeping a large house in order, and unable to indulge in the luxury of a trip away from home, camped out near a beautiful little stream on the outskirts of the village in which she lived. Her husband, herself and four children, two boys and two girls, comprised her family. The equipment was exceedingly simple and consisted of a few hammocks, two of which served as beds for the boys, and four cots, some bedding, three or four chairs, a table, some shelves and several other pieces of furniture, manufactured by the boys from packing boxes, an oil stove, a few dishes and cooking utensils. They had good drinking water from a near-by spring, and a retired spot in the pretty stream, with the aid of an old piece of awning and a sheet, made an excellent bathroom.

The children did much of the work of the camp, and each day seemed full of the delights of a picnic. The mother had perfect bodily rest, and more time for reading than she had had for years, while she enjoyed a close, almost hourly,

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companionship with her children which had been impossible in their former surroundings. The constant outdoor life did wonders for them all, and at the end of two months they returned to their pretty home convinced that no other family in the country had spent quite such a happy vacation. Such a life is certainly to be preferred to the stuffy, poorly ventilated quarters and high prices of some of the so-called Summer resorts.

If you are going away for the Summer, take simple apparel for your little ones, and wherever you may be, at seaside or mountain, however fashionable the place, be reasonable; let the children have as unrestrained and natural a life as is possible under the circumstances. Keep them away from the gossip of the hotel verandas. Above all things do not economize in your nurse; try to get someone in whom you can place confidence, someone to whom you can safely confide the children for long days in the woods with a basket luncheon, a hammock or an old wrap on which the children can loll and sleep as they grow weary. Fill their little minds each morning with good *suggestions*, the most powerful of all incentives to good acts; tell Freddie you were so

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glad he remembered to run and push the easy-chair out on the piazza for poor old Mr. Blank, who suffers so with rheumatism, and tell Gertrude it was very thoughtful of her to bring those beautiful wild flowers to Mrs. G——, who is almost a chronic invalid. Tell them it is such a comfort to you to see that they are trying to remember to walk very quietly in the hotel corridors, so as not to disturb the older people who have come away from home, many of them for rest and quiet, and then give each child a hug and kiss and say naively, "I wonder whom you are going to make happy to-day beside mamma and papa. Oh, I wonder if you have thought," etc., etc.—here lodge a suggestion for some special thing you want done; the chances are that your wishes will be carried out with alacrity.

And to you, dear, well-meaning grown-ups, I would say that "More evil is wrought through want of thought than e'er through want of heart"; so won't you pack away among your Summer resolutions an extra lot of patience for the little ones you meet in your travels, and the determination to treat them as courteously as you wish them to treat you?

## CHAPTER IX

### HABITS AND WILL

Habits and will: the sum and substance of all character, good, bad and indifferent, may be summed up in these two short words. Good habits and the will to do right, combined with average intelligence, we have every reason to believe will result in comparative harmony of life and a fair degree of success.

Habits are like the little "Old Man of the Sea," as easily acquired and as difficult to rid one's self of. Will and habit should stand in the relation of master and servant, but we everywhere see instances in which the relationship is reversed and habit dominates an enfeebled will, to the great detriment of its possessor. So much has been said and written on the subject of habits, it seems so much more popular a theme than the will, that what I say may at first thought appear to be at variance with commonly accepted ideas.

It seems to me that good habits are strong or weak in proportion to the intelligence and will be-

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hind them. For purposes of illustration I will take the simple habit of tooth brushing, which, with other cleansing processes of the toilet, is performed by the ordinary adult as a matter of course or with practically no conscious thought; but, given two children of ten years of age, let both be trained alike, up to a certain point, to brush their teeth carefully the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night; then let one be given some special instruction in the nature of the teeth, the causes of decay, the inestimable value all through life of a good set of teeth, the part that special kinds of food play in their up-building, and the injurious influences of certain other products manufactured with a view to tickling the palate rather than to nourishing the bodily structure.

I can readily imagine a fascinating lecture on this vital subject by a dentist, who was keenly alive to such an opportunity to render lasting service to eight or ten small listeners. The lecture should not consume over thirty minutes; it should be illustrated with slides, and the children given plaster-of-paris casts of sound and defective teeth to examine. They should each be presented



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with a new brush and shown *how* to reach all parts of the mouth and teeth, while the vertical as well as lateral brushing should be insisted upon. It would be a mistake to fill the child's thoughts with a jumble of scientific terms; his imagination is active, he does not want the toothache, and he wants to have good teeth when he is "grown up"; the lecturer should make plain to him *his* part in avoiding the one and obtaining the other result. Having had explained the protecting power of the enamel, is he so apt to crack nuts or break ice with his teeth as the boy who knows nothing about his teeth? I think not; and this brings me back to the two ten-year-olds.

Granted now that their regularity of living was suddenly succeeded by frequent journeys by sea and land, and continuous change of location without the constant supervision of a nurse, and only the occasional admonition of a very busy mother, which child, think you, under stress of fatigue and inconvenient toilet accessories, would be more apt to become negligent in the matter of brushing its teeth, admitting, to begin with, similarity of temperament in the two children? Is it not reasonable to assume that any interruption of the

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habit would meet with more resistance through the intelligent will of the *instructed* child than from the boy who performed the habit mechanically?

If I have made clear the great importance of allying an intelligent will with the force of habit, I shall, I trust, be forgiven for what may have seemed at first glance a digression from my subject. While teaching the child the *power* of habit, and therefore the necessity for forming correct ones in early life while mind and body are receptive and impressionable, he should never be allowed for an instant to lose sight of *will* as master. "I do this thing, I form this habit, because it is right as well as expedient, and I therefore *will* to do it." Not in such words, perhaps, but in some form the childish mind must hold this ideal. We descend to the animal plane if we admit wholly that "we are mere creatures of habit."

A child had a habit of eating voraciously. Its meals during the first five years of its life were taken in the nursery at a small table at which a rather untidy, uneducated nurse presided. The mother was horrified to discover when the child

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was permanently promoted to the luncheon table of the adults that the child literally "gobbled" its food. Dismissing her incompetent nurse and employing a girl of refinement and education, she stipulated in her contract that for the time being she must concentrate upon the child's table manners.

Among the effective processes used in curing this child of its objectionable table manners was the withholding of dessert unless the first part of the meal was eaten properly; this rather severe measure was not adopted until the child had been in training for several weeks. The first steps were to put only a very small quantity of food at a time on the child's plate, to insist upon small mouthfuls, and upon counting eight between each one after the preceding one had been swallowed. The new nurse was exceedingly deliberate in all her movements at the table and insisted upon the same deliberation in her charge. Undue haste was punished by increasing the counts to sixteen instead of eight between each mouthful. If the fork or spoon were not held properly the child was deprived of them for a few moments and could not go on with its meal. The nurse was

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never impatient, holding always in mind the fact that she was combating the effects of a past unfavorable environment rather than any fault inherent in the child. She frequently told little anecdotes and stories in which the characters were represented as having the most perfect table manners; she recognized with words of hearty encouragement the daily improvement, while the promised reward for final victory was promotion to the family luncheon table. Mothers who have the entire care of their children can prevent the formation of many unpleasant little habits which are apt to escape the attention of the ordinary nurse.

A child's environment should include regularity, punctuality, cleanliness and order; he unconsciously absorbs these virtues if they are in constant evidence about him, and habits acquired in such an atmosphere are apt to stay by him through life; habits under such circumstances almost form themselves. An instance which illustrates the force of habit regardless of the environment was that of two little girls who were visiting a Southern town during the cotton season. The town was quite a cotton market, and

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at the particular time of which I write presented an exceedingly untidy appearance; not only were detached samples and other pieces of cotton scattered about the dusty streets but newspapers and other trash made the town unsightly. In the midst of such a scene these two little girls held up a diminutive paper bag from which they had just extracted the last animal cracker and with very earnest faces and genuine anxiety in their tones inquired, "Oh, Mamma, *where* shall we put this empty paper bag?" With some difficulty their mother restrained a smile, and taking them into one of the shops near by she said to the amazement of the young clerk, "Will you kindly put this paper bag in your trash-basket? These little girls are not accustomed to throwing paper in the street." The clerk told a friend afterward it was the best lesson in neatness he had ever had.

"A place for everything and everything in its place," is one of the first habits a child should be taught, for upon its exercise not only is his own comfort dependent but in a greater or lesser degree that of every household of which, in the course of his natural life, he may be a member.

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The scissors, the hammer, the ball of twine, the pot of paste, the garden tools,—who has not lost time and patience in a search for one or all of them because of some one's carelessness? The child who has had a lost article last should be made to look for it, all day if necessary, and if he complain that the boys are waiting for him and that he hasn't time to look now, it should be represented to him very kindly but firmly that the article may be wanted before he returns, and by some one whose time is more valuable than his; he can easily be made to see the *justice* of putting things in their places after he has used them if he is properly approached on the subject, and the habit of order developed from such a motive will stand the stress and strain of life far better than the habit formed through fear of punishment.

The habits of reverence, gentleness, courtesy, honesty, courage and patience, like their opposites, are absorbed by the child from those with whom he is most closely associated. It is in these attributes that an ounce of example outweighs a ton of precept. It is a charming custom to lose no opportunity either in reading fiction or in the circumstances attendant on everyday living to ex-

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press an enthusiastic appreciation of the good, the noble, beautiful and true, but valuable beyond and above all discussion of these virtues is, "To be as nearly as we can what we wish our children to be."

It is impossible in an article of this length, to do even faint justice to a subject capable of so many divisions, each of which would form an article in itself; for instance, the habits of thinking, of attention, imagining, application, etc., etc. The parents who systematically train their young children in the formation of good habits, at the same time developing their will power, save themselves incalculable worry and anxiety later on. There is no other work so well worth while, tedious and discouraging as it may seem at times.

In the formation of a habit the important thing is not to break its continuity until it is well established. For example, in enforcing a habit of order, the child who has left its clothing lying on the floor should be made to return if possible, no matter how far he has gone, and put the clothing in its place.

Whatever the shortcomings of any parents are or may have been, to-day is ours, the future is

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ours, and if we will carefully study our children, and seek from every reliable source for light upon their spiritual, mental and moral natures, we shall be working with God, not so perfectly as we would wish, but as best we can. Than that angels can do no more.



## CHAPTER X

### THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS AS FUTURE WIVES AND MOTHERS

Almost as many as the sands of the sea are the ideas, theories and practices concerning education. It is my purpose to discuss only such phases of the subject as bear directly upon the training of girls as future wives and mothers. It is true that all training a girl receives from her earliest infancy up through her teens has its influence on her adult life, but there is certain specific training which proves invaluable to her when she assumes the great responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood—training which a girl is supposed to receive at home, but which in nine cases out of ten is acquired only through many failures and oft-times bitter experiences after her marriage. The argument that a girl may never marry is too weak a one to urge against an expenditure of time and effort in this direction, since all prac-

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tical knowledge is valuable, and even though a woman may never marry, it behooves her, if for no other reason than because she *is* a woman, to be able at any time to assume the duties of conducting a home and to understand the management of children. There are frequent emergencies in life when she may be called upon to serve temporarily in the capacity of home maker, and it is well for her and for others if she can acquit herself creditably.

The independent schools of domestic science which are being established throughout the country, and the courses in such instruction which are gradually being added to the curriculum of the public schools are very hopeful signs.

The instruction given and the principles demonstrated are as accurate as those of mathematics and as applicable to everyday living. The girls not only learn through theory but have thorough daily practice in the various branches of instruction. In addition to this part of a girl's education, it is of great advantage to her to attend a special course of lectures in a kindergarten; as a training school it will be of inestimable value to her in her probable future vocation of mother.

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A few weeks in a children's hospital will afford a bright, receptive young woman opportunity for acquiring many helpful ideas concerning the proper ventilation and care of a sick-room, the bathing of invalids, registering of temperature, etc. She will by no means have the knowledge of a trained nurse at the expiration of so brief a period of time, but she will have some familiarity with the best methods of nursing; in other words, she will have an intelligent standard rather than ignorant conjecture concerning a very vital subject.

While these are admirable adjuncts to a girl's preparation for wifehood and motherhood, they are not available to all who may desire them, and in such cases mothers should do all in their power to give their daughters the benefit of their own experience, and at the same time to secure such literature on domestic science and kindred topics as may prove helpful and reliable. I know a mother who thinks one can scarcely begin too early to train daughters in household arts. Accordingly, she is planning the organization of a cooking club with her two little daughters as a nucleus, the eldest only nine. She will give up

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every Saturday morning from eleven to twelve to this club. It will number five or six children, and they are always to prepare the luncheon of which they will no doubt afterward partake in great merriment. They will learn to prepare all manner of simple, wholesome dishes, as well as to set a table properly and to serve the luncheon in courses.

The members of the club are enthusiastic over the prospect. They are also to have occasional instruction in proper sweeping and dusting, and will be shown how to keep the linen closet in order. They will wash and put away all the china after the luncheon and sometimes clean the silver. In the Winter they are to be shown the furnace, and will be asked at the next meeting to enumerate the differences between their own and the furnace shown. If it is a hot-water furnace, the danger of lighting a fire before the water is turned on is explained, as well as the necessity for removing the ashes regularly and keeping the furnace free from clinkers. The inconvenience and expense caused by the freezing and bursting of water pipes are dwelt upon at length, and the various cut-offs shown and their use demon-

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strated, with again the request that the outside members shall, with the assistance of the adults of their respective households, investigate the plumbing in their homes. The kitchen range, with its dampers and drafts, will also be given attention.

This same mother is planning to alternate with the cooking club a sewing and home-making club. She proposes that each member of the club shall have a doll, presumably a few days old. Before the purchase of the dolls, each little mother is to make the infant's outfit from patterns furnished. When the outfit and baby baskets are complete, there will be an expedition of the club to one of the large shops, where the dolls will be purchased, and at the next meeting of the club will begin the real training for motherhood. Each little girl is to be taught the most approved way of bathing and dressing a baby, the use of the thermometer in the bath, and the hundred and one other things which the world usually believes women know by intuition, but which many a long-suffering infant knows they do not.

The members of the sewing and home-making club will follow the babies through the intricacies

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of colic, teething and the various minor ills to which even healthy young children sometimes succumb, and the nursing and care of the sick will undoubtedly prove a fascinating feature of the club meetings. The founder of the club intends to introduce questions of punishment, obedience, etc., as these imaginary babies grow older; she anticipates some interesting developments as they approach the ages of their respective mothers. There will be little impromptu dramas for the purpose of illustration, in which the cross, unjust, impatient mother is represented in contrast with the patient, sympathetic, tender, yet firm mother.

Between the ages of nine, or even less, and fourteen the average girl has a decided interest in domestic affairs, which manifests itself in various ways. She wants to help make cake, or, better still, make it all by herself; she dotes on the manufacture of sweetmeats; she wants a room all to herself which she promises to keep as neat as a pin; she is delighted at the opportunity to use a sewing machine, and to be allowed, with some slight assistance, or rather direction, to cut out and make a muslin frock for herself.

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✓ It is interesting to note that these domestic tendencies usually increase with the approach of the adolescent period, and it is the part of wisdom to take advantage of this flood tide of interest to give the girl every opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with every branch of household work.

As a future wife it is well that a girl's attention be called to the strenuous life of competition which her future husband must daily encounter, and the imperative need that she should make home conditions as tranquil for him mentally, and as comfortable physically, as she possibly can. However perplexing and trying her problems, the brave and successful housewife will not burden her husband with them. There are circumstances which render it necessary for her to seek his advice, but she should choose a time when he is rested, and she should broach her subject cheerfully and not in that complaining and helpless fashion which is irritating to even the best of men.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the necessity for the physical education of the girl; she should be daily impressed with the value of health,

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and should be taught how to retain it. It is sadly true that the misdirected ambition of parents is largely responsible for much of the ill-health that girls suffer both before and after marriage. As soon as any girl gives the slightest indication that her school work is impairing her vitality, her duties should be lightened or she should be taken away from school altogether for a time. I care not how near the end of the term it is, nor how high she stands in her classes; a diploma or a first honor is weighed in the balance and found wanting, when a woman who should be a happy wife and mother awakens to the fact that to obtain them she sacrificed her health. It should always be borne in mind that mere book learning does not constitute education.

Some author has said that, "To see things as they are is the mission of culture, and to adjust one's life to this clear perception of things, is to gain the power and perception that come through culture."

A girl's emotional nature should never be ignored; it is not to be destroyed but disciplined. She should be trained to forgive but not excuse evil in any form, to be reverent, kind, just, true,



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sympathetic and considerate. As wife and mother the three attributes which will be of most value to her are faith in God, self-control and patience. It is difficult to conceive of an unloving mother, though many seem lacking in tenderness, which should surely be love's handmaiden, but self-control and patience are to be won only through brave and persistent effort.

It is not possible in an article of this scope to do more than touch upon the necessity for the enlightenment of a girl upon certain topics related to sex. Information should be conveyed as delicately as possible, and limited to such matters as it is absolutely essential for her to know. It seems to me a mistake to make unnecessary disclosures, which, however sacredly we may regard them, are more than apt to shock the sensibilities of the immature mind. Perfect confidence between mother and daughter will preclude morbid questionings in this as in other directions, and will minimize the danger of such indiscreet associations as even the most carefully guarded girls may encounter before reaching maturity.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EDUCATION OF BOYS AS FUTURE FATHERS AND CITIZENS

However great their privileges in after years, there is no doubt that the majority of boys have rather a hard time at certain periods of their development. Some of their vicissitudes may be beneficial as a means of strengthening their characters, but there are trials which they have to encounter which have the opposite effect, trials which might be entirely obviated, or minimized to a great degree, if fathers gave one-tenth the time and thought to their sons that they bestow upon their business. No one can question the undying influence of a wise and devoted mother, but fathers, because of the memory of their own boyhood, should surely be able to bring to the training of their boys a clearer comprehension of boy nature and boy needs than the average mother can hope to do. This is especially the case during the adolescent period of a boy's life, commonly known as the awkward age. It is at this time that the

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boy most needs his father's companionship and his mother's tolerance and sympathy; if both his parents then share fully his confidence, they can be very hopeful concerning his future.

The trouble is that while most fathers find their boys amusing and diverting between the ages of one and six, their interest seems to diminish from that time on until they are ready to go to college or to enter the business world. Of course, meanwhile their affection has remained unchanged.

The training of a boy as a future father and citizen should begin in the nursery and should be continued from that time on until he completes his education. Every educational institution should, in the making of its curriculum, provide special courses of instruction bearing upon these two vital phases of the boy's future life, and they should not be optional but obligatory.

The kindergarten gives an admirable impetus in the direction of intelligent parenthood and good citizenship, and it is a pity that some of the fundamental principles which govern the kindergarten cannot be introduced in the primary, grammar and high schools.

In the matter of home training, I know a

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mother who taught her two sons simple cooking, as well as how to wash dishes, to sweep, dust, make beds, sew on buttons, etc. Once they were thorough in these details she seldom called upon them for assistance, but she argued that such knowledge would tend to make them considerate and thoughtful husbands, and she felt it the duty of every mother of boys to keep in view the strong probability that they would some day have in their keeping the happiness of a woman. She also regarded this elemental domestic training as part of the practical equipment for the emergencies of life. The effeminate or timid boy, afraid of the ridicule of companions, or one who showed a strong disinclination toward the acquirement of such knowledge, could receive considerable training during a few weeks of camp life, when interest and novelty would easily banish all objections.

Whenever feasible a boy should have a room of his own, and in it he should be allowed as much freedom as is compatible with the comfort and safety of the other members of the household. Chemical experiments should be tabooed, and it may be necessary that his zoölogical specimens should occasionally be remanded to the back yard,

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but beyond insisting upon cleanliness and a fair degree of order, he should be left in undisturbed enjoyment of the treasures which he will, from time to time, accumulate. Sympathetic interest in his collection, whatever its character, is a strong bond between parent and child, and his taste in this, as in other matters, often serves to indicate to the father or mother the bent of the boy's mind. Consideration for his belongings will teach him consideration for the belongings of others.

All thoughtful persons now appreciate the importance of discovering as early in the boy's life as possible the place he is best adapted to fill, in his capacity as bread winner, be it "doctor, lawyer, merchant or chief," and the advantage of shaping his educational course to that end is self-evident, but there are comparatively few who recognize the necessity for a training for parenthood and citizenship.

The boy's world consists of his home life, the life at school and his associates or social life; if any one of these places presents weak or faulty conditions, the boy's development suffers proportionately.

To have one's house and yard a rendezvous for

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the boys of the neighborhood is undoubtedly a sore trial to the mother who prides herself on her exquisite housekeeping, but a spotless house is of no consequence in comparison with a happy, wholesome boyhood spent within the radiant influence of a good home, and a wise mother is she who will make home as attractive as possible. A good, clear-burning lamp or drop light, an abundance of interesting literature, a bright fire, an invitation to join some game, a taffy pull, the popping of corn, apple roasting—simple pleasures all, but strong in their power to hold a youth at home, and the memory of such evenings possesses a subtle influence which follows him through life. The very young boy should not be allowed to go out in the evenings, but as boys grow older, coercion is dangerous; they must be led, not driven. The boys' clubs and the girls-and-boys' clubs can be made profitable and enjoyable methods of entertainment for young people and should be held in the different homes of their members once a week.

One of the mothers of my acquaintance, who has several sons and one or two daughters, frequently invites attractive, sensible girls to tea on Friday evenings. She thinks it advisable for a boy

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to become so accustomed to the society of sweet and refined girls, that any other kind would jar upon his sensibilities. She feels that she is aiding him to establish a standard for his girl friends, and that such associations, under such circumstances, will prove their value when he chooses a wife. He may or may not give his heart's best allegiance to any of his boyhood friends, but he will be more apt to make a wise choice than the boy who has had small opportunity for such social life.

Boys get very little sympathy, yet they need it quite as much as girls, especially until they have passed the adolescent period. I do not mean a sentimental sympathy which weakens character, but the intelligent sympathy of comprehension of boy nature, and of the aims and aspirations which, if encouraged at that particular time, have much to do with the boy's future. Ignorance of the world as it really is, handicaps both young men and women. It is not necessary to know about all the evil that exists, but a certain amount of knowledge is essential for safety in this, as in every other direction. Sentimental and mistaken views of life lead to much unnecessary suf-

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fering on the part of their possessor, and the shock of disillusion often warps and embitters a character otherwise fine. It is better, therefore, that a growing boy should be confronted with conditions rather than theories; while his mind is in a plastic state the impressions made will be profound, and it is possible to thereby produce an abhorrence of evil.

For instance, I think the most effective lecture on temperance would be one which was illustrated by colored slides, showing the effects on the body of the excessive use of alcohol, and if such a lecture could be followed by a trip to an almshouse, to a prison and to an asylum for inebriates, I believe mental images would be formed which would have a strong deterrent influence on a normally constituted youth. It is almost impossible to convince a hardy, vigorous youth that anything he really wishes to do can hurt him physically, but when he is shown a man who is a physical wreck through intemperance in any line, and is made to realize that that man was once as strong as himself, he is at least set to thinking, he has had the truth presented to him.

The same thing applies in the boy's education



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as a citizen; he should be trained to feel a sense of duty toward the community in which he lives, and an active interest in all that concerns its welfare. The boy who can be roused to righteous indignation over defective or insufficient water supply, bad pavements, poorly lighted streets, and other municipal discomforts and menaces to health, will, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, be a public-spirited, useful citizen when he reaches manhood. I know a mother who never fails to call her son's attention to every municipal defect, and who always ends by saying, "Well, I shall certainly be thankful when you can vote, for I am sure you will do all you can to make things better." This particular boy is only eleven years old, but he is already at heart an earnest, upright citizen. There are parents who spend many unhappy anxious hours *worrying* about their sons, when they should be *studying* them, and strengthening by every means at their command the ties between them.

A father of two fine young men told me he attributed much of his successful management of his boys to the fact that he had at an early period of their boyhood purchased for them a pony and

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small cart, for which the boys had expressed an ardent desire; he said he felt he could not afford to gratify them, but he talked the matter over with his wife and they agreed that they would economize in some other expenditures, and give the boys their hearts' desire. They took the boys into their confidence and carefully discussed the matter. The boys were to a certain extent to reimburse the family purse as they had opportunity to earn small sums from time to time; they were to take the entire care of the pony and cart, and to give as much pleasure with it to others as they could. The result was all that the father could wish, and he assured me that it was the wisest investment he had ever made. Through their affection for the pony the boys learned to be considerate of all animals, and it was an unceasing source of occupation and amusement for them. If parents will only take a genuine interest in all the things that interest their boys, they can hold their confidence, and so long as they possess that they can be reasonably sure that their sons will not go far wrong.

## CHAPTER XII

### HOW TO MAKE HOME ATTRACTIVE

How to make home attractive is not so difficult an art to acquire as many parents imagine. Some men and women possess this art by nature, but it is possible of attainment by all who are willing to study the subject systematically. The first requisites for real happiness in any home are an abundance of faith, love, justice and sympathy. Love for each other is usually a natural state of affairs among the members of a family; love of justice is more uncommon, yet without the latter attribute there can be no lasting harmony in the house.

Love is often inconsiderate in its demands; justice exacts only what is right. It is most important, therefore, that parents continually strive to be just themselves and to strengthen and develop that sense of justice frequently manifest in the smallest tots.

There are homes in which even a casual visitor receives an impression of restraint; there are

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others in which the atmosphere is such that one unconsciously expands in its genial warmth, and without effort gives the best that is in him. This indefinable atmosphere of brightness and hope is not dependent upon material surroundings, since it is often lacking in homes of splendor and luxury, while some humble cottage may be filled with it.

Still, the material conditions are powerful in their influence and should never be ignored. Mothers and fathers should endeavor to furnish their homes as attractively as their means will permit; of course, the result of the expenditure of sums either large or small is dependent upon the taste of the purchaser and the consideration given the matter. I have in mind two rooms: one represents an outlay literally of hundreds of thousands of dollars, while the other is easily within the reach of a very modest purse. The first room is a museum, the second the artistic *living-room* of a happy household.

An effective way of establishing happiness in a home is to call all the members together and form a partnership, with father and mother as the senior members of the firm; each child is ap-

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portioned some special work which contributes directly or indirectly to the comfort of all the others. A contract is drawn up somewhat after this fashion :

“We, the undersigned, love each other with all our hearts, and we want to do all we can to make our home the happiest place in the world. We will try always to be patient, kind and thoughtful, and to do cheerfully, and to the best of our ability, whatever our part of the household work may be. We will try to close the doors after us in Winter, and not to bang the screen doors in Summer, to remember to use the doormat in muddy weather, to keep our things in order, to put the hammer back in place,” etc., etc., etc.

On occasions children are delighted with a certain amount of form and ceremony, and pleasure will invariably be derived from the drawing up of the contract, its impressive reading by father or mother, the discussion of it with further suggestions from the children, its final adoption by a unanimous vote and lastly, the affixing of signatures, even the four-year-old having his hand guided, his name appearing in big, scrawly letters

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which differentiate it for practical reasons from the other signatures.

Once a week the contract should be read aloud to the assembled family; no one should ever publicly be accused of having failed to live up to its spirit, but it should be tacitly understood on such occasions that acknowledgment and apology should be made for specific shortcomings during the week past; that is, such shortcomings as affected the entire or even greater part of the family.

The majority of people who have been of the greatest service in the world are those who were capable of taking responsibility; it is one of the surest methods of development, and it is amazing to see how quickly even very young children will respond to its influence. It is this idea of individual responsibility which renders the household contract valuable. As far as possible each child should be made to feel the responsibility of the happiness of the family. The boy must not be boisterous in the house, because little sister is just going to sleep, or sister is practicing, or mother is writing, or because he might get into the habit of being boisterous indoors. If he persists, show him his signature to the contract and ask him if

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he wishes to withdraw from the firm. The same principle would be applicable to a hundred cases. Consideration for others is a lesson to be well learned in childhood, for it is that which lends to social life its charm and grace, and gives to the world its most successful reformers.

There are innumerable methods of making home attractive. Some of the most tenderly remembered in after years are such games or amusements as are shared by the entire family. What joyously thrilling and exciting times are those when father and big brother play bear, when mother and all the sisters are unexpectedly attacked while walking through the woods (literally the hall), or when the Landing of the Pilgrims and other events of historical interest are enacted! The over-careful student of child nature must keep in mind that the children are not really frightened by the bears, but filled with wild merriment and glee which quickens their circulation, fires their imagination and does them a lot of good generally. However, such frolics are not usually good for children just before retiring, nor are stories adapted to that hour. The child's last waking impression should be one of order, and he should

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always carefully put away whatever material he used during the evening. A chest of drawers or closet with numerous shelves is invaluable in the living-room for such purposes, and each child should have some space allotted for his especial use.

Pillow fights have a peculiar fascination for children, and I would suggest to the mothers who refuse to countenance them in the house, to cover some old sofa cushion with colored wash slips and let the children use them in the back-yard or on the lawn; this is rare sport for a chilly Autumn day. Reading aloud is one of the most delightful features of home life, and books of travel, adventure and history are admirably adapted for this purpose. The hour directly after the evening meal should belong to the youngest children, and as soon as they have retired the older ones are entitled to a half-hour or more with father and mother. ✓

There are many good games to be had at the book and toy shops, games for strengthening the memory, familiarizing the players with historical events and for quickening the powers of observation and concentration.



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Wedding anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays of all kinds are given due prominence by the makers of happy homes. The children are pressed into active service in all the preparations for such occasions, and these same preparations entered upon with so much interest and enthusiasm afford an opportunity for the teaching of much that is useful.

The work for Christmas may be commenced weeks, even months, ahead, and it will be a wild and surly fellow, indeed, who cannot be lured into spending many evenings at home, absorbed in the manufacture of various articles, from a toy cradle to a glove box or set of shelves for magazines, provided he be supplied with the proper tools for such work, and given some instruction in their use. It is profitable to anticipate the anniversary or holiday by reading aloud all that is known concerning its origin, celebration, etc.

Children delight in dressing up, and a small masquerade party is always voted "great fun." The costumes may be of the simplest sort and of impromptu manufacture. It is the mystery of the little mask which mamma cut out of a scrap of

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black or white cloth which gives dignity and novelty to the entertainment.

One mother whom I know has a trunk in the attic to which she consigns all manner of shabby finery, in which the children disport themselves on rainy days. Another mother has a huge scrap bag the delights of which are reserved for days when the children seem to get up on the wrong side of the bed. Each child is allowed to select four different pieces, and the distraction of selection from such a variety of pieces of every color and design invariably produces a soothing effect, save where the choice of two falls upon one precious piece, and then there follows amicable adjustment by a drawing of straws.

Children as well as the older boys and girls of a family should occasionally be allowed to invite a friend to luncheon or tea ; in the case of younger children the invitation should be a written one, as mothers often decline verbal invitations of young children, fearing lest they be extended without the knowledge and consent of the other mamma.

If space permit outdoor gardening, the children should be given each a plot of ground and encouraged to cultivate both vegetables and flowers.

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Where this is not practicable they should be given the care of house plants.

It would be a great step forward if parents instead of grieving and worrying over the fact that a son or daughter has formed evil associations would set to work with all the zeal they can command to provide counter attractions at home. Though parents may not approve of some of their boys' associates, it is better even to invite the latter to their homes in case their boys will not give them up, than to have their sons meeting them surreptitiously in undesirable places.

Sidney Smith says: "If you make children happy now, you will make them happy twenty years hence by the memory of it." Such effort has the most beneficent, rejuvenating influence on the parents themselves, while the great majority of children who have had a wholesome, happy home life, have always with them through memory and association, one of the strongest possible incentives to right living.

I believe in beginning the day with family prayer, and each member of the household should read a verse or two from the Bible; in addition the father or mother can read some helpful and

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inspiring paragraph from some of the year books, and if the prayer is a brief, earnest appeal for help to meet all the duties of the day, a note of harmony will be sounded to which the hearts of all will respond in a greater or less degree.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ON MANNERS

There is so much to be gained through the exercise of good manners that it is amazing, in a world where success is such an idol, that greater attention is not paid to training the young in this very important branch of education.

Genuine courtesy, thoughtfulness, consideration for others, are usually the result of what is termed good breeding and are most effective when practiced unconsciously or as a matter of course.

It is quite true that children are apt to reflect their parents both in principles and actions, and they acquire by example nothing so easily as good or bad manners. There are a few resolutions which parents should repeat each day, and one of them is this: "If I wish my children to be thoughtful and considerate of me and polite to others I must be thoughtful and considerate of them and polite to all with whom I come in contact." In no other phase of home life is example more potent.

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In the simple matter of requests, how few people there are, comparatively, who throw any graciousness into their manner of asking favors of children. For instance, a group of women were engaged in preparations for a lawn *fête* for the benefit of some charity; the dress of one of them had become disarranged in her arduous efforts in decorating a booth, whereupon she turned to the woman nearest her, saying with a very pleasant smile: "Mrs. Blank, I'm so sorry to trouble you, but have you a pin and will you please fasten this ripped place for me?" A moment later she called out in a peremptory tone to a small boy who was having a grand time with a lot of other youngsters on an adjacent lawn, "Johnnie, come here this minute." Very reluctantly the little fellow sidled up to her, when she continued, "Go straight up to the house and get that ball of twine on my writing desk. Now, don't dilly-dally; I need it right away."

"But, mamma," Johnnie protested, "it's so far to the house, and I've been six times already this morning; can't you wait until we come back from lunch?"

"Certainly not; go this instant, or I will tell

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your father not to take you to the football game on Saturday."

Another mother, on a similar occasion: "Henry, dear, mamma is so sorry to take you away from your game, you seem to be having such a nice time, but I cannot hang these beautiful Japanese lanterns until I have more twine. Will you please help us out?" adding with a smile, "Let me see; there are twelve lanterns and only this tiny scrap of string."

Off went Harry at a run to do his mother's bidding, and if his childish mind could have expressed in words what he felt it would have been something after this fashion: "I'm a great boy to help people; my mother tells me all the time she does not know what she would do without me. She's so sweet, I don't care if I have been to the house six times; those lanterns have to be hung, and I'm the fellow to get the string." This is no self-glorification; he is simply expanding under the influence of recognition and affection; he is glowing with the joy of service; he is but feeling as we all do in an atmosphere of appreciation. Contrast his state of mind with that of Johnnie,

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who performed his errand with rebellion in his heart and heaviness in his footsteps.

It is the hundred and one small courtesies that add to daily life its sweetness and charm. It is not enough to be merely polite; children should see graciousness as well in the manners of those about them. To the mother who realizes that her home is lacking in this essential I would say: Do not be discouraged; begin to-day, and try the effect of extreme courtesy in your own conduct. If there are members in the household older than yourself, make your consideration toward them so marked that it cannot fail to impress the children. Always offer them the most comfortable chair in the room; ask them if the light is agreeable, etc., etc. If you have been negligent in such matters, you will have to overdo in the beginning in order quickly to establish a standard for the children.

An easy and effective method of teaching children good manners is for mamma to play with them; sometimes they are all little girls, and mamma, of course, without being priggish, tries to be just such a little girl as she would like her little girls to be. Sometimes they are all ladies, and the



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little girls in long skirts visit back and forth with mamma, lunch with her, have afternoon tea and thus acquire niceties of speech and manner which could hardly be given through precept.

The first requisite of good manners is self-forgetfulness. I have seen people whose social opportunities had been extremely limited appear to better advantage than those who had been accustomed to the usages of polite society all their lives, simply because they had no desire to out-shine or impress other people, were good listeners and observant enough not to commit a breach of manners.

Politeness in the home should be a matter of course, and equally a matter of course should be appreciation. A pleasant sense of obligation should pervade all the household. If Kate has taken a little of her allowance to purchase flowers for the dining table or sitting-room, it is well for mamma to say before all the family: "Kate, your flowers are beautiful; it is very sweet of you to give all of us the benefit of some of your pin money." This will bring a little glow of satisfaction to Kate's heart and will be suggestive to the other children.

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I recently heard a party of six or seven women commenting on the lack of manners among children. It was the experience of each that their friendly salutations to the children of their acquaintance were either ignored entirely or received but scant recognition. One woman said: "I try to be charitable in my judgments of all children, but I must confess there are some who rather repel than attract me. Many appear so indifferent that my heart always goes out to two little girls whom I frequently meet and who always give me a smile and bright greeting."

It is usually a lack of training that makes children habitually negligent in this direction, though we must always bear with the shy, timid child or the dreamy, absent-minded one, whose thoughts may be far away even while she looks at you.

The shy and self-conscious child is at a serious disadvantage, for he is often too timid to do the thing he knows is proper. Such a child should be frequently praised, and opportunities afforded him to express himself in play and word and action. ✓

One mother secured immediate and happy re-

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sults in several directions by losing no chance to praise judiciously the manners of those about her. For example, she said to the children :

“Whom do you think I met this morning? Little Thelma D——, and what a dear little girl she is; she always gives me such a pleasant smile and bow, I really enjoy meeting her. I hope you always speak to mamma’s friends as pleasantly as she does to me.” It is quite true that grown people are very often remiss in the matter of speaking to children. I once heard an old gentleman express enthusiastic admiration for a friend of mine, closing his remarks by saying, “Even when she was a little girl she never passed me on the street without a pleasant bow.” When I told my friend of this she laughed heartily and said her reward had come after many years; she said her bows were received with such indifference that at first it required some courage to continue them. After a time, however, it became such a matter of course to her to bow pleasantly to him that she never stopped to consider his manner of response.

This is the great secret of the best manners. It is the being polite as a matter of course; nowhere does habit stand one in better stead.

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Almost all affectation, save that which has its origin in a species of nervousness, arises from a desire to impress people in one way or another, and children should be carefully guarded against this demoralizing tendency. It is one thing to desire the approval and affection of those about us; it is quite another to assume various affected poses in an effort to obtain them.

When children are urged to be polite and thoughtful the primary motive should be the simple one—because it is right; secondly, because it makes others happy and comfortable as well as themselves, and lastly, because only through the exercise of true courtesy can they win love and friendship.

Parents often do their children serious injustice by criticizing or speaking harshly to their relatives, neighbors or acquaintances in their presence. Such conversation, though the child may comprehend little of it, prejudices his mind and unconsciously affects his manner when he is thrown with the objects of his parents' disapproval. Children cannot discriminate and are likely to confound criticism of trifling faults with serious condemnation.

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Refined table manners are an almost invariable accompaniment of good breeding; they are more difficult of acquirement and retention than any other class of manners, since children are usually blessed with good appetites. To restrain these at table, to teach the child to eat slowly, to masticate thoroughly each morsel of food, to hold knife, fork and spoon properly, to take but a sip of water at a time instead of gulping down a tumblerful—all these things require unceasing attention on the part of parents or caretakers.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A PLEA FOR THE ALLOWANCE

Accuracy and attention to detail are invaluable characteristics, and one of the simplest, most practical methods of inculcating them is through an "allowance" of spending money. Every child should be given a certain amount of money weekly and should be taught to spend it wisely and to keep an account of his expenditures. If the child be too young for even very simple book-keeping, let him give a verbal report of the use to which he puts his pennies. As soon as he is old enough to make figures and to do simple sums in addition and subtraction, he should be supplied with a small memorandum book and stimulated by every laudable means to keep his accounts correctly, to balance and present them for his parents' inspection once a week.

It is not surprising that children should have the most conflicting ideas regarding money: on one side they hear it declared to be the root of all evil; on the other hand, they know that their papa

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goes to his office every day but Sunday for the purpose of *making* money. They hear one man denounced because he is stingy, another because he is extravagant. They are aware that everything in their homes and everything they wear and call their food is bought with money, and it is not infrequent for them to hear trying family discussions concerning ways and means. They often see the poor and shabbily dressed children at school and elsewhere ignored by rude companions or inconsiderate adults, while the little girl or boy whose papa is known to be rich is frequently the recipient of marked favor.

Money is a tremendous power in the world, but it is not by any means the greatest. The child who is taught at an early age the legitimate province of money will not be apt, as he grows older, to worship it or to fawn upon those who possess large wealth. In his personal responsibility for even a very small amount he learns the limitations as well as the advantages of money. He discovers there are sources of power within himself greater than money. He also learns that it is not the boy with the most spending money who has the greatest number of *real* friends; the expendi-

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ture of his allowance in treats for his companions secures but a spurious popularity which cannot blind even childish eyes, and were it not for the ceaseless chatter of thoughtless grown persons, who dilate upon the advantages of wealth and who are always wishing aloud that they were rich, the average child would attain his majority with a far clearer estimate of the relative values of character *versus* money.

It is fitting that the boy should be taught that he has his way to make in the world and that he must put forth his best endeavor if he would have money and the comfort, beauty and freedom from the petty cares which money can procure for himself and those dependent upon him; but he should be warned of the pitfalls which lie in the path of those who become dazzled by the glitter of the golden calf, and who sacrifice health, happiness and principle in their worship at its shrine. It is a long, long way from the accumulation and expenditure of pennies to that of thousands, but it is in that interval that the child's, the boy's, the man's, mental attitude is almost indelibly fixed.

Two Summers ago I met a young girl who was a guest in the same house where I was visiting,



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and my first impression of her was so favorable that I lost no opportunity of studying her and learning all that I could about her home life and training. Exquisite neatness in her dress and belongings, and punctuality, were among her numerous virtues. The question of finances arose at dinner one day, and she informed us that she had had an allowance ever since she could remember; it had begun with a penny and had increased until at the age of fourteen years she was buying all her own clothing and often did family shopping for her mother. She learned through actual experience the cost and the durability of materials, and that other lesson equally valuable which some women never seem able to learn—to be gowned suitably on varying occasions without the care and expense of a great number of costumes.

If she was unable to make her accounts balance, a certain percentage of her next week's or, as she grew older, month's allowance, was deducted. She became so accurate in time that a few moments sufficed at the end of each month to balance her books. How few women, comparatively, can furnish such a record! Most of us dread for any other eyes but our own to scan our account books

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and discover, as invariably they must, our tacit admission of failure as accountants in the "sundries" which appear on each balance sheet.

This particular girl said she could never thank her father and mother enough for the training she had received along the line of finances. She instantly knew what she could afford and what she could not, and had acquired the habit of expending her money several times in imagination before she made a purchase in reality. She was thereby satisfied with her ultimate choice. *Apropos* of this there is a Spanish proverb: "You can plan your garment as often as you choose; you can cut it but once." Think what a helpmeet such a girl will prove to her husband!

I heard an unpractical individual once object to an allowance for children on the ground that it would teach them to think too much about money. One might as well say they should not learn to walk, for fear they may run away. In the present state of civilization money is an essential, and many a life might be spared a tragic end if boys and girls were early taught the value of money and its judicious expenditure.

The child who is allowed five cents spending

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money a week should be given the opportunity of earning at least five cents additional. With this little capital he should be expected to provide his own pencils (otherwise the chances are that he will not take care of them), an occasional writing pad and other very inexpensive sundries which may in the course of a year be covered by an allowance of ten cents a week, and still leave a margin for some of the petty follies children delight in.

A child should be encouraged to save, if only a penny a week, from his spending money. He will the more easily accomplish this if in the beginning he saves his pennies to purchase some article he especially desires. By this means he acquires the *habit* of saving, and it is the early formation of this habit which enables some people of quite modest incomes to make their money go a long way. There is a decided difference between saving and hoarding. If a child wishes to carry his purse all the time let him do so, but first warn him that if he loses it he will have to replace it from his allowance.

The allowance should be gradually increased until it practically covers all expenditures save

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board and tuition. The opportunities for earning money should also be increased, and from the latter sum the boy or girl should be expected to replace, in part at least, any articles in their own homes or those of others which have been broken or impaired through their carelessness or negligence, or any of the belongings of their companions which they have injured.

The majority of children are allowed a little extra money for Christmas shopping, and they are usually very eager to add to this fund by performing additional services, for which they should receive compensation. There are those who object to children being paid for work on the ground that they will become mercenary. This is not at all probable, for in the average home children are daily asked and in some instances required to perform many small services for which they are scarcely thanked, while it is only service out of the ordinary for which they will be remunerated. The majority of them will have to earn money sooner or later, and they are but serving a valuable apprenticeship when they are permitted, under certain conditions, to work for pay in childhood and to handle their own funds.

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The ten-year-old boy who has been on an allowance for several years will readily indicate whether his tendencies are those of a miser, a spendthrift, a jolly good fellow or a practical, well-balanced financier—and it is tendencies for which we should be continually on the lookout; a tendency is far more easily altered than a fixed habit of character. The child who is miserly should not be told that he is so, but he should be shown the pictures of misers in their old age, he should be told as dramatically as possible the stories of misers who began by being selfish and niggardly in childhood and who died of cold and hunger with thousands of dollars in yellow gold sewed in the ragged lining of their clothing. Give such a child your closest attention, tell him you know a poor little boy who cannot go to school because he has no shoes, and that you are going to contribute something toward buying a pair. Will he give something, too? The power of suggestion is so great that if we were always ready with the right suggestion at the right moment the little ones about us would expand with good thoughts and good intentions, as flowers open in the warm rays of the sun.

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I have often wished that there might be an occasional talk in public schools on the subject, "The Purchasing Power of a Dollar," the speaker illustrating with the objects themselves half a dozen wise and unwise methods of spending it.

Many parents expect their sons and daughters to develop habits of economy and to show a disposition to save money when they have never been allowed to handle it. If you have never given your children an allowance, begin to-day to do so. You will have to exercise patience in the beginning, and must devote a little time and thought to the matter, but you will be repaid a thousandfold for such effort by the deep gratitude of your children as they reach maturity. Promptness in paying over to them their allowance will train them to meet their obligations promptly. Many of the unpleasant scenes which occur sometimes between husbands and wives could be avoided had they received in their youth adequate instruction in finances.

## CHAPTER XV

### READING FOR CHILDREN

Charles Lamb believed in turning the child loose in pastures of rich literature, where he might browse at his own sweet will. This presupposes the existence of a good library in the home with elimination from its shelves of a dozen books, perhaps, which it is better the child should not see until he has reached years of discretion. The consensus of opinion of those who are recognized as authorities on the subject of children's literature is that at as early an age as possible the child should be brought into direct mental contact with the truly great authors of all ages. It is quite true there will be much that is beyond his comprehension, but it is equally true that he will unconsciously absorb much that will enrich his imagination and develop in him the power of discrimination.

Very fortunate is the child who is born into a home where the ideals are high, and where the books, the music and the conversation are of the

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best, but such culture is not universal; if it were, there would be small need for an article on children's literature. The average parents have not had in their own childhood such an environment, and it is because there is such a spiritual awakening throughout the world concerning the child and its needs, that among the hundred and one questions these earnest mothers and fathers are asking is, "What shall we give our children to read?"

Many times has the question been answered, and numerous have been the lists of books suggested, but none to my knowledge is so definite, so helpful as the classified list of books for children under nine years of age and between the ages of nine and fourteen, which has been prepared by the Literature Committee of the National Congress of Mothers. The members comprising this committee are men and women who are recognized authorities on children's literature, and the list as it stands at present is the result of their combined efforts for several years past. It is because I have found this list invaluable in my own home that I tell of it. It is furnished on application at a nominal cost.



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A strong bond for holding a family together is the habit of reading aloud for an hour or two several evenings during the week. Information should not be the object of such reading, but culture in one of its finest forms will be gained if the best books are chosen. Boys and girls who have been studying the greater part of the day should either read or have read to them books interesting, amusing or pathetic. Books of travel, well written, biographies of interesting persons, historical and literary essays by men of letters all afford delightful reading. The Waverley Novels are among the happiest recollections of my own childhood, while *Gulliver's Travels*, *Alice in Wonderland*, Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, *The Arabian Nights*, *The Water Babies*, *Tanglewood Tales*, *Tom Brown at Rugby*, *The Jungle Book*, *Æsop's Fables*, *Uncle Remus*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Swiss Family Robinson* and others I never tire of reading to my own little ones.

Goethe has said that we ought to see a good picture, hear some good music and read some good poetry every day. Some suggestive poems for children under nine are most of Tennyson's

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lyrics, "The Day Dream," "The Merman," "Winter"; Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin"; Southey's "Inch-Cape Rock"; Longfellow's "Children's Hour," "Bell of Atri," "Legend Beautiful," and most of "Hiawatha"; Whittier's "In School Days"; Bryant's "Robert of Lincoln," and Emerson's "Mountain and Squirrel."

For children from nine to fourteen some short specific poems which are greatly loved are Tennyson's "Revenge," "The Vision of Sir Launfal," "The Charge of the Light Brigade"; "The Forsaken Merman," by Matthew Arnold; Gray's "Elegy"; Bryant's "Thanatopsis"; "The Ancient Mariner" of Coleridge; Scott's "Lochinvar"; Browning's "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix"; "Ratisbon"; "Dog Tray"; Byron's "Sennacherib," "Prisoner of Chillon" and "Blenheim"; Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark"; Whittier's "Snowbound" and "Maud Muller"; "Abou Ben Adhem," by Leigh Hunt. Scott's poems are full of chivalry and stirring incident which fires the enthusiasm of the youthful reader.

From fourteen to twenty the boy or girl who has early had access to the best literature will derive great enjoyment from Goethe, Dante, Mil-

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ton, Homer, Cowper, Goldsmith, Wordsworth, Spencer, Browning, Tennyson, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier and others who stand out from the crowd, provided the taste for poetry has been judiciously directed and cultivated.

Shakespeare, all are agreed, should be read from ten years and onward throughout life. One author has said he might well be the daily bread of the intellectual life. A normal, healthy child will not, as a rule, understand those things he ought not to know; his very innocence is his protection from a knowledge of phases of life which would be harmful at his tender age.

The folk-tales and fairy stories of all nations have an irresistible charm for children, and through them their imagination is awakened, their powers of observation quickened and their sympathies developed.

That child is rich indeed who early in life becomes familiar with mythology. Zeus, Juno, Apollo, Aphrodite, Perseus, Persephone and a hundred others are all real and marvellous beings to the childish mind, and Olympus a glorious place beyond the sunset gates.

Reading is a matter of character as well as of

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culture and diversion, and enables one to appreciate the true, the just and beautiful.

While there are many good books written especially for children, it is an injustice to limit their reading to such ; they have as much right as their elders to the best books in the world.

Of course, children's tastes and temperaments vary, and while it is admirable to let the child follow his own bent in reading as in other things, as far as practicable, the office of the parent is early to discover that bent, and to modify or direct it in such manner as will best liberate the child's own powers. The child whose imagination runs riot, and who dotes on fairy tales, should be lured by pleasant devices into Nature study. A little mineralogy, some interesting theme in physical geography, volcanoes for instance, a good biography of some epoch-making man with its accompaniment of contemporaneous historical facts—all these will attract his attention to the real world about him, and counterbalance his interest in his dream world. The intensely practical, unimaginative child is to be pitied, and the most fascinating of the Norse and other legends should be read to him with all the dramatic force that the best

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reader in the family can command. There is a spark of imagination in every child, and it is only necessary to find what fuel will best feed it. The prosaic child can often be interested and thrilled by games in which he himself takes the part of Siegfried or Ulysses, or some other great hero. By such means he can be gradually led into an appreciation of the purely imaginary in fiction.

A good encyclopædia is no longer regarded as a luxury; it is a necessity in every home. As a storehouse of facts it is a valuable accessory to the family reading class as well as to the individual members of the household. It should be conveniently placed, and the children early trained to refer to it the moment they need it; information acquired under such a stimulus of interest is usually retained. It is a great mistake to make a list of subjects to be looked up some other time; a string of unrelated facts makes but a slight impression on the brain, and in addition to this objection is another—"some other time" is very apt to be no time at all, and that particular list generally reaches the waste-basket without being checked off.

The Psalms, the Epistles of St. Paul, the Book

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of Job, are masterpieces of literature aside from the value they possess as being a part of that most wonderful of all books, the Bible. I have seen very young children listen for a half hour with genuine interest to a Bible reading by their mother.

If it be true that the sub-conscious mind receives and retains all impressions, then it surely behooves us to read to our young children the best we can obtain for them. To be able to read aloud acceptably to others is an accomplishment all should endeavor to acquire, since it adds so much to the pleasure of the home life.

It may be well to sound a note of warning on the subject of reading aloud to very young children just before their hour for retiring. Nervous, imaginative or excitable children are apt to lie awake long after they have been tucked in their beds, thinking about the story they have just heard. Even if it be simple in plot and devoid of any harrowing incidents, it is usually, if it be worth anything at all, of sufficient interest to set their little brains going at the very time when they should cease from all activity. It often seems the only time that busy mothers can find for read-

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ing to the little ones, and in many instances no real harm is done, but in quite as many other cases the habit leads to serious results. The half hour before the late dinner or tea is a far better time for reading aloud to young children.

Parents should question their children closely concerning the books they read ; not in a didactical fashion, but as though they were talking with an intellectual equal. It is so easy to say to George, if he has been absorbed in some volume, "By the way, George, what do you think of that book? I read it a long time ago, and I have almost forgotten it."

George will fairly beam upon his questioner and will be only too happy to relieve his full mind of that which at that particular moment is very vital to him. He does not realize as he talks on and on, stimulated to unusual expression by your sympathy and encouragement, that he is unfolding page after page of the book of his character to your watchful eyes. Never let him suspect your motive by preaching too much at such times. Differ with him, of course, if you think his view a mistaken one, but do it courteously.

In this day of public city, town and travelling

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libraries, good books are practically within the reach of all, and with a reliable book-list for a guide the parents whose own opportunities for culture have been circumscribed can aid their children to make a choice of the best literature, and if they will only keep their hearts young and their minds receptive they will find themselves walking hand in hand with their children through a land of unceasing delight.



## CHAPTER XVI

### GROWING UP WITH ONE'S CHILDREN

To be of real service to any individual we must be in sympathy with that individual; we must be able approximately to do two things: first, to put ourselves in imagination in the place of the one we desire to help, thereby obtaining, in a degree at least, his point of view; second, we must draw upon all the immediate resources of knowledge we possess, the chief of which, in such a case, is a knowledge of human nature and our own and other people's experiences in similar situations. Thus equipped, we may hope to be of some real help to those whose lives lie close to ours, or whose paths may even cross ours.

The chief reason why parents do not try to grow up with their children is because the importance of such a process has, in the majority of cases, never been presented to them. They accept parenthood as something that would in the nature of things occur, irrespective of whether or not they had had any training for such responsibility,

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or any desire to assume it. They try to do the best they can from their point of view, make mistakes in proportion as their view is limited and have daily to resort to experiment, where, if they had been under a wiser educational system during their youth, they could have depended upon knowledge. They are so busy in a thousand ways looking after the material interests of their children and trying to meet the innumerable demands made upon them by the outside world that almost before they know it their children are ready to fly from the nest, and they realize, often with bitter pangs, that they have not only not made the most of their opportunities in fitting them for life, but that they are not close to them, do not know them as they should. It is small consolation in such a moment to recall the long list of outside activities; they sink into mocking insignificance by the side of the greater work, the higher duty that lay within their home.

Fathers excuse themselves on the plea of business, while mothers refer despairingly to church work, social obligations and various organizations that make inroads upon their time. All these things have their legitimate claims, to be

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sure, but as no two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time, so no woman, whatever her calling in life, should undertake more than she can satisfactorily accomplish. If she is to grow up with her children and be at the same time a home maker and an inspiring companion to her husband, she has undertaken one of the largest contracts on record, one that will tax her every power to its utmost capacity.

I am now writing about the woman of average means. The woman of wealth can bring to her assistance in the management of her home often such efficient aid that she has leisure that circumstances deny the woman of modest income. She is therefore free to undertake outside philanthropic or civic work, and in her case it should be *noblesse oblige*. Very different are the conditions that confront the great mass of American mothers. The domestic service they are able to secure is more than apt to be incompetent and unreliable, and often they are left without any at all. If they have assumed outside obligations, the irony of fate calls for the discharge of those obligations just as the cook has taken French

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leave or the nurse announces that she has decided to get married.

All this by way of preamble to impress my readers with one of my fixed ideas, viz.: that mothers of young families should never be urged to join anything unless it be a Mothers' Club without any rules, or something for recreation chiefly, which exacts no requirements of its members, attendance above all things being optional. Such mothers need a large fund of reserve force to meet the emergencies that will arise in even the best regulated families, to say nothing of the continuous demands made upon their mental and physical resources for the very process we are considering, namely, the growing up with one's children.

I know a mother who with the advent of the first baby entered heartily into the idea that she had undertaken a long journey with the most mysteriously fascinating and wonderful of companions, who each day exacted rare tribute from her of patience and self-denial, but who in himself was such an ever-increasing source of delight, through his affection, growth and development, that she prayed in her soul the journey

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might last through all eternity. She was a wisely sympathetic mother; I never knew one more so. Again it is sympathy; sympathy first, last and always sympathy. Not the sympathy that would shield the child, the boy or girl, the young man or woman from the experiences which must come and which, rightly met, give added strength, but the sympathy which *comprehends*, which inspires and encourages to fresh effort, if need be, to greater endurance.

The sympathetic mother who is growing with her children will start in simulated terror if her son of six, proudly mounted on a new hobby-horse, shouts aloud, "Mother, you'd better get out of the way quick. I cannot hold this wild horse; he is going to run away." She knows all the technical and slang terms descriptive of all the games that are the delight of boy nature, and listens with rapt attention to a recital of a day's triumphs and mishaps. She is ready with fresh marble bags for the marble season and is famous for her taste and skill in the manufacture of kites, making the older children her allies in this work as soon as they are equal to it. She thinks baseball a truly wonderful game, and

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makes an enthusiastic audience of one when the season of tops is at its height. It must have been such a mother as this of whom a little boy who was playing a "wishing game" said, "I wish my mamma was my little twin brother, and next I wish we had a mamma exactly as she is now."

Such a mother never speaks in her children's presence of the "awkward age," thereby increasing the painful self-consciousness of that period, nor does she draw attention to the fact that fourteen-year-old Johnnie has on the sixth new necktie in the course of two weeks. She calls him proudly "my son" at this time of his life, and with sweet diplomacy appears already to lean upon him and to advise with him concerning small matters that afford the opportunity for confidential talks. She wonders if some of his twelve-year-old brother Paul's companions are all they should be; she thought she saw one of them covertly handing Paul a cigarette the other day; she hopes *he* will quietly look out for Paul and use his influence to convince him that it is not manly to smoke cigarettes or to use bad language; she is so glad she can depend on him to set Paul a good example, etc.

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She has her quiet chats with Paul, too. She never scolds him for his little assumptions of mannish airs, and does not say a great deal about the cigarette episode, but she sees that there is an illustrated lecture in the school he attends, on the subject, "Can a boy who has the cigarette habit become a successful competitor in athletic sports when he enters college." Nine chances out of ten Paul will respond to this appeal, when at his age he might not be influenced by the morality of the question.

This mother never laughs over childish misfortunes unless she is quite sure of an answering smile from the one aggrieved; she has by no means forgotten how real were her own childish disappointments, griefs and humiliations. Indeed, it is her constant endeavor to keep in mind not only the memories of her own childhood, but the necessarily varying points of view of the children about her.

It is usually easier for a mother to grow up with her daughters than her sons, because she and her daughters have so much in common, and yet most of the great men in history acknowledge with deep gratitude a mother's influence.

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There is one thing parents should recognize, viz:—that their children *are* growing up and that their authority as parents grows weaker every day, while their *influence* waxes stronger in proportion as their government has been wise, tender and just. Many a household is discordant because parents insist upon treating their grown sons and daughters as though they were still children. They issue commands, criticize and find fault, forgetting apparently that the season for training is practically ended; and, were it not, such methods would result in more harm than good. I know a family in which are two daughters, both past twenty-five, and a son in his thirties; they seldom, if ever, leave the house without being questioned as to where they are going, when they will return, why they go, why they wear such a garment instead of some other, wouldn't they best take umbrellas, are they warmly or coolly enough dressed, as the case may be, etc., etc. It is scarcely surprising that in a burst of confidence one of the daughters should have said to me, "These endless questions, this treatment of me as though I were still a child, will drive me to



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marry some man for whom I do not care, or send me out into the world against my parents' wishes to earn my own living." Personal liberty is such a precious possession, and life is so much sweeter and happier in households when there is mutual confidence and where trivial personal questions are regarded almost as a discourtesy.

Parents with the best intentions will frequently, in the presence of strangers, speak to their grown sons and daughters in such a manner as to cause them positive discomfort and embarrassment. Such parents have certainly not grown up with their children.

Truly to grow up with one's children it is essential to be rid of that mistaken but prevalent idea that children are personal property, an idea which on occasions voices itself in some such expression as "He is *my* child; I guess if I want to whip him I can," or in another instance when told that tea and coffee are not good for young children, "Well, I guess I ought to know what's good for my *own* children."

*Apropos*, a story was told me the other day of a woman who believed firmly in tea as a family beverage, but who did not take kindly to the

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idea of Mothers' Clubs; she said she knew all about bringing up children, that she ought to, she'd had *nineteen*. "All living?" asked an amazed bystander. "All but fourteen," she replied calmly, "and they mostly died when they were teething."

The secret of a successful growing up with one's children lies in the concentration of prayer, thought and energy toward that end. I know a well-balanced, sensible mother who has three young children, one a baby of a few months, the eldest almost six years. The family income is not munificent, and she can afford but one servant. In consequence there is a great deal she has to do herself. She is bright, attractive and capable, and though not robust is able to discharge her daily duties without undue sense of fatigue. Continuous efforts are made by friends and acquaintances to draw her into outside work, and social organizations, but she firmly declines all invitations, saying, "After a while, when my children are much older, I shall be glad to do the things you ask, but I have neither the time nor the strength for them now." When told that she should for the sake of her children take more interest in social affairs, she says she thinks

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she can accomplish more by her present plan for their future social success, than if she taxed herself physically and financially during these early years of their life.

She does not run after pleasure, but many pleasures overtake her, and scarcely a day passes that she does not perform some kindly service for some one outside her family circle. She seems to have time for the sweet, gracious courtesies of life, to remember those whom others seem to forget, and in her home there is an atmosphere of repose and content which is very restful and refreshing in this age, when so many women live by a calendar that has crowded days for weeks to come.

It is the spirit in which we do our work that makes of it a joy or a tedious task. The grandest, farthest-reaching work that mothers and fathers can do is to grow up with their children, and there is nothing else in the world that they can do which will yield them such satisfaction, such happiness. If you have allowed other things to interfere with companionship with your children, turn over another leaf and honestly concentrate your attention upon them. You may

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see things which will shock, surprise and grieve you, and awaken a quick remorse for your past indifference (however unintentional it may have been), but you will also see much to love, and much that, under wise training, will blossom into character strong and true.

## CHAPTER XVII

### COMPANIONS

There are few problems confronting parents which are more perplexing than that of suitable companionship for their children. It is a matter difficult to control, and yet all potent in its influence for good or evil in the life of the child. There are no infallible external guides to the selection of proper associates for one's children, since rudeness, deceit and all manner of objectionable characteristics are found among children in every sphere, and it sometimes happens that the young son of your laundress may be better behaved and have better principles than the son of your rich neighbor.

There is, however, a general rule, which will prove as safe as rules about such questions can be, namely: to choose your children's intimate associates as far as practicable among the children of your own intimate friends. An inherited friendship is always beautiful and greatly to be desired, though in a country of such area and

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continuous change as ours instances of inherited friendship are comparatively few.

A child's environment largely determines the nature of his associates, and I believe the time will come when parents who are contemplating a move, will, before deciding upon a locality, give as much thought and investigation to the character of the children in the neighborhood as they now do to the arrangement of the houses that may be under inspection. No one can gainsay the power of association, while all are conversant with the imitative faculty of childhood. One child with evil propensities can work much mischief among a great many other children, and as soon as such traits are discerned in any child he should be carefully watched and lovingly remonstrated with as occasion offers.

The fear of offending a child's parents is an element that deters many a man and woman from doing their duty by the child by notifying the parents of that which they should surely know, never with the idea of having the child severely punished, but that the parents may be given one of the keys to the situation and may, through the

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power of love and knowledge, help the child to overcome the tendency to wrongdoing.

Many mothers allow their children to leave home directly after school, not to return until dark. They often do not know where they are during the intervening hours. Such mothers are surely unconscious of the sacredness of their responsibilities, or they could not thus ignore one of their chief obligations, viz. : the supervision of their children's time. They are comparatively safe, even with indiscriminate associates in out-of-door games and sports, but it is the hours spent indoors that should be judiciously supervised.

I know the mother of a very large family of children who believed so firmly in this constant espionage that in the large living-room where she had her sewing machine, desk and favorite books, and where she spent almost her entire time indoors, the children each had a space apportioned them wherein were stored their treasures of all kinds, and it was in this room they played, studied and pursued their various activities, and in inclement weather entertained their guests. Opening from the room was a large veranda, which in pleasant weather served as

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an open-air sitting-room. By such an arrangement this mother had a full knowledge of all that transpired among her children and their playmates. She interfered as little as possible with their freedom, and so accustomed were they to her presence it caused them no feeling of restraint.

She had innumerable opportunities for correcting tendencies which could never have occurred with the nursery in one part of the house and her sitting-room in another. Her favorite method of adjusting differences was the trial by jury, or letting the most culpably guilty child act in the capacity of a judge at his own trial, where only one or two persons were involved.

One of her inviolable rules was that no two children were ever allowed to go to the toilet room together; no reasons for this admirable regulation were given beyond those of modesty and refinement in habits. When this mother went out she endeavored always to have her place supplied by some relative or trusted servant while the children were quite young. As they grew older she appointed one of them to act as monitor or arbitrator in her absence, and on



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her return always asked for a full account of the day's doings. She was vigilant in her supervision, not because of any lack of confidence in her children, but because experience had proved to her the wisdom of such a course. Her tact was such that she ruled almost wholly by suggestion, and her subjects were as unconscious of supervision as they were of any irksome authority.

If a child is suspected of having measles, scarlet fever or any other contagious disease, he is immediately placed where he cannot infect others, and every mother in his vicinity calls her brood together and in a state of more or less excitement and fear, examines them for any symptoms of contagion, and warns them in the most impressive manner not to go near the house on which appears the red or blue placard. All this is natural and to a degree proper, but it would be well if mothers were as keenly alive to the danger of moral as they are to that of physical contagion. I do not believe in the flower-pot method of training children, in setting them apart and preventing all contact with other children, but I do most emphatically believe in con-

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stant supervision of them. During their early years, at least, while character and will are still in process of development, they should be as carefully protected from evil associations as from contagious diseases.

I have known mothers to retain nurses whom they knew to be untruthful and tricky, and whose example could not be otherwise than pernicious to their young charges, because they were capable in such matters as keeping the nursery and children clean, and were expert with the needle. It is often so much easier to do the things that seem expedient than the just and righteous things we are perfectly aware we *should* do.

Every child, every boy and girl who comes to your house to see your children should be an object of intense interest to you; watch them without their knowledge, and if you see grave faults speak of them to your own children; speak pityingly, as though you felt the wrong-doers might not know better, and urge them to stand up bravely at all times for the things that are right, and thus by their influence and example help their companions to do right.

A determined mother can keep her children

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from association with other children whose companionship would be harmful, even if they are close neighbors. She can prohibit any visiting on their part, and if the objectionable children come at seasons when it is not convenient to exercise the desired supervision she can give her own children some simple tasks to perform, which will serve as an excuse for their not having company. It would be neither right nor kind to exclude such children entirely from one's home, as they are really objects of pity, and a wise and tender woman can do much for them while they are sharing the hospitality of her own little ones. Like all irresponsible and untrained creatures, however, they need a great deal of careful watching.

One should try to divest one's self of all prejudice in studying children, and learn to look beneath the surface for the real character. Some very blunt, untrained children, so far as external polish is concerned, are sincere, generous, warm-hearted, while many a child sweet-mannered and smooth-tongued in the presence of adults is lacking in moral perception and may be selfish and scheming. No one with a well-developed sense

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of justice will condemn or sit in judgment on a child, no matter how serious his faults. All evil is to be deplored, of course, but our one thought regarding such children should be, "In what way can I help them?"

Personally I should almost rather any one would give me a physical blow than to say in my presence, "He is a *horrid* child." In the first place, we expect too much in the line of non-essentials in children, and in the second place we often do not know the heredity and environment of a child, or knowing them, we do not reckon with them as we should in our estimate of him.

Children should never be allowed to make visits without express permission. When a child first begins to toddle about the yard or up and down the pavement, then is the time for parents to establish the law of boundaries: "So far shalt thou go and no farther." When such a habit is once formed, it becomes second nature for the child as he grows older to ask for permission before leaving home, whatever the inducement.

It is easier to control children's associations in early childhood than at a later period when

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through school and other features of their educational and social life they are thrown with large numbers of girls and boys, representing homes of every character. It is then they indicate through their choice of friends the established standards in their own homes, for true indeed is the homely saying, "Birds of a feather flock together." It is unwise and uncharitable to denounce an undesirable friendship your son or daughter may have formed while you were not on guard. In such a case you must "Be as wise as a serpent, and as harmless as a dove"; prevent as far as possible the making of engagements with the object of your disapproval by suggesting some duty to be performed at that especial time, or better still, whenever it is possible, substitute some pleasure which will exclude all thought of the desired companionship.

Propinquity is usually the determining factor in the development of friendship among younger as well as older people, and therefore it behooves parents to frequently invite to their homes the boys and girls whom they would like to have as close associates for their children. I have heard of a small community where the parents

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were so fully alive to the importance of supervising their children's social life, that in bad weather the mothers took turns in having the children assemble in their homes, where they passed very happy hours in innocent amusements of all sorts.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### TEMPERAMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Even in very ancient times the temperaments were discussed, and the classification then made has remained practically the same. In recognizing the influence of the body over the mind, the ancient philosophers laid a great deal of stress on the power of temperament. It is on physiological grounds that the temperaments are distinguished. They are four in number and are designated as follows: the sanguine, the phlegmatic, the nervous and the melancholy.

The sanguine temperament, according to one authority, is proclaimed by a tolerable consistency of flesh, moderate plumpness, light or chestnut hair, blue eyes, great activity of the arterial system, a strong, full and frequent pulse and an animated countenance. Persons thus constituted are easily affected by external impressions and possess greater energy than those of the phlegmatic temperament.

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The phlegmatic temperament is indicated by a pale, white skin, fair hair, roundness of form and repletion of the cellular tissue. The flesh is soft, the vital actions are languid. All indicate slowness and weakness in the vegetative, effective and intellectual functions.

The external signs of the nervous temperament are fine, thin hair, delicate health, more or less emaciation and smallness of the muscles, rapidity in the muscular actions, vivacity in the sensations. The nervous system in individuals so constituted preponderates greatly, and they exhibit extreme nervous sensibility.

The melancholy temperament is characterized by black hair, a dark, yellowish or brownish skin, black eyes, moderately full but firm muscles and harshly expressed form. Those endowed with this constitution have a decided expression of countenance. They manifest great general activity and functional energy.

It is seldom, if ever, that these four temperaments appear pure or unmixed. In the same person they are conjoined or overlap each other, so that while the dominant temperament may be obvious, it is well-nigh impossible to enumerate



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every modification. Dr. Spurzheim says: "There can be no doubt that the functions which contribute particularly to nutrition—those, for instance, of the stomach, liver, intestines, lungs and heart—as they are in a healthy or diseased state, modify the whole organization and influence the energy with which the individual parts act. Sometimes it would appear as if the vital power were concentrated in one system to the detriment of the others. The muscular or athletic constitution is often possessed of very little nervous sensibility; and on the other hand, great activity of the brain seems frequently to check muscular development. Thus it is important from a physiological point of view to take into account the peculiar constitution or temperament of individuals, not as the cause of determinate faculties, but as influencing the energy with which the special functions of the several organs are manifested."

A recent classification of the temperaments places them as follows:

- The motive or mechanical.
- The vital or nutritive.
- The mental or nervous.

## TEMPERAMENT, DISCIPLINE

These correspond in the order given to the sanguine, the phlegmatic and melancholy, and the nervous.

While with heredity and environment largely rests the nature of the individual's development, it is temperament that modifies both and transcends circumstances. One of the unceasing marvels of the world is that it contains no two human beings exactly alike. Just as faces vary, so have we reason to suppose that no two brains are alike in their mental capacity; and thus, while a general knowledge of child nature is invaluable to parents and educators, it is highly effectual only when it is supplemented by close and continuous observation of the individual child it is desired to help.

Now, for the relation of temperament to discipline, I cannot do better at this point than to quote from Dr. Preyer's *Infant Mind*. He says:

In two of the four temperaments the excitability and therefore the sensitiveness to impressions of various kinds is great; in two of them it is small. The duration of the after effect of every impression, the tenacity with which the memory image is retained, is, in the melancholy and the nervous, surprising, the organic change in the brain

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accompanying it being probably considerable; in the other two, the sanguine and the phlegmatic, this effect is slight.

Thus we get the following classification, which is especially to be borne in mind in our judgment of the child no less than in our judgment of the growing youth, in connection with education and particularly in the forming of character and in instruction, both physical and intellectual:

	Excitability.	After-effect.
Sanguine .....	Great	Small
Phlegmatic .....	Small	Small
Nervous .....	Great	Great
Melancholy .....	Small	Great

Is is the exception rather than the rule to see families in which discipline is administered according to the needs of the individual child. Whipping and locking in dark closets, two of the severest of the various forms of punishment, are resorted to regardless of the child's temperament and of the ultimate consequences to him. The child of phlegmatic temperament is least injured by such treatment, but because of his very insensibility, it fails as a corrective measure and only undermines his self-respect.

## TEMPERAMENT, DISCIPLINE

The children of sanguine and nervous temperaments are those most frequently in need of discipline; that is, according to a superficial view of the matter. They are keenly alive to every phase of their environment, sensitive to variations of temperature, imaginative, cheerful and easily aroused to enthusiasm, yet often manifesting great irritability over trifling discomforts or obstacles.

Children of these two temperaments are full of nervous energy and constantly tire themselves out at play. All mothers should be cognizant of the danger signals which in most cases precede an outburst of temper, and the wise and just mother is she who will, through the exercise of tact and patience, prevent such outbursts. Each fit of temper, obstinacy or other naughtiness strengthens the tendency in that direction, until, if allowed to continue unrestricted, a habit is developed which it is very difficult to eradicate. I have seen the occupants of a nursery who were all in a state of more or less discord restored to normal good nature by simply raising the nursery window, thoroughly ventilating the room and

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drawing the attention of the children either to some object in the landscape or some picture on the wall. On another occasion four children who had been sitting for an hour or more, and who had reached a state of general fretfulness and ill-nature over the continuous possession of paste-pot and scissors, were rendered positively jubilant by the simple suggestion of a watchful mother that they play windmills for a while.

Children of sanguine and nervous temperaments are very receptive, manifesting in their mentality the same sensibility which is characteristic of their physical organism. They are easily guided by suggestion, and parents who have mastered this potent law are not only equal to emergencies, but are much more sure of the obedience, affection and confidence of their children than the parents who mistakenly force issues with their children, and who expect to find in them such self-control and reasoning powers as they themselves do not possess.

Shutting a nervous or imaginative child in a dark closet is nothing short of torture; such

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punishment occasionally results in really disastrous consequences.

The child of nervous temperament is apt to be timid, and his fears of all kinds should be tenderly dealt with. The child of nervous or sanguine temperament who has what is termed "tantrums," should be left alone, the mother or nurse withdrawing to an adjoining room when their preventive measures have failed. The little culprit soon ceases kicking and screaming when he finds himself without an audience. The parents who see in such paroxysms misdirected energy rather than total depravity will be able to avert such outbreaks until the tendency is overcome. One mother was very successful by giving the child some errand or work to do.

The child of phlegmatic temperament is slow mentally and physically. He takes life easy, largely because of his lack of sensibility. While children of sanguine and nervous temperaments should lead quiet, regular lives, free from mental or physical strain or excitement, the phlegmatic child needs stimulation, and he is positively benefited by pleasurable excitement that would be harmful in either of the other two cases.

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A simple and effective method of disciplining the phlegmatic child is by depriving him of dessert or any dish of which he is especially fond. Punishment of any kind should always be preceded by a firm but kindly talk, in which you should make it very clear to the child that you exercise your authority only in order to help him to remember not to commit such offenses again.

“Do you know why I whip you?” asked a father of his little boy. “Yes, sir; because you are bigger than I am,” replied the child. What kind of discipline is that which degrades the body and arouses the child to a sense of injustice? Many children do things for which they are severely punished, without really knowing at the time that they were doing wrong. At an early age we should establish in the child’s mind clearly the difference between right and wrong, and his power in choosing between them.

The most effective punishments are those which quickly follow the wrong-doing and which bear some relation to it. The child of melancholy temperament is apt to brood a long time over real

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or imaginary injuries. He is often called morose, sullen or obstinate, when he is not. He can best be helped, as, indeed, all temperaments can, through love and sympathy. Many children are so full of life, so impulsive, that they are forever getting into mischief. Their pranks are usually devoid of all malice, and it is but justice to them to recognize the fact that at the time of committing such pranks they do not at all comprehend the inconvenience, loss and occasional disaster which may result from their actions. To chastise the helpless little body for such offences accomplishes no lasting good; it is the child's mind that needs to be developed in the direction of his obligations to others, and some idea lodged in the brain as to the difference between liberty and license.

I wish the mothers who believe in corporal punishment would write to me and tell me of some of their experiences. I should like to try to argue them into a better way. It is sad but nevertheless true that many a child is punished when it is the parent who most needs it.

No one should ever punish a child while un-



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der the influence of anger or impatience. Parents who ignore this rule are sure to suffer through remorseful memories in years to come.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE MORAL VALUE OF OCCUPATION

Is there any mother living who has not been asked by her children, "What can we do *now*, mamma?" How the question has been echoed and re-echoed by childish lips of all nations, in all climes, throughout all the ages! And what a marvellous question it is, coming straight from God, the Creator, through His most guileless messengers, the children.

It is as natural for children to be busy as it is for them to breathe; they cannot and should not be still during their waking hours. All the time they are playing they are acquiring physical and mental vigor. So I shall regard my subject from the point of view that whatever tends toward the development of the child in any direction is of the nature of occupation, and is of value in proportion as it is adapted to his general and specific needs.

I firmly believe that the habits of idleness are acquired. For confirmation of this idea I ask

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you to watch the baby who is allowed to creep before he can walk ; how long does he stay in the spot where he is placed ? Does he not almost immediately start in pursuit of some object (usually something he can put in his mouth, or thinks he can), and does he not continue his progressive tour from one point to another, until overpowered by sleep or hunger ? We are all familiar with the ceaseless activity of the wee toddlers, who are here, there and everywhere. Indeed, it is a source of universal amazement that so many steps can be taken during the course of a day by two short fat legs, and that without evidence of conscious fatigue. That is because the steps are not taken continuously ; put those same tiny feet on a long and uninteresting path with a definite destination to be reached in a given time, and they will soon grow weary.

The nervous system in very young children is too mobile and excitable, as one author says, to "admit of long-sustained effort in any one direction, a fact of special moment in the education of children in whom the mental powers are deficient." The very restlessness of the normally constituted child indicates that his tasks should

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be extremely short and light. They should also be of great variety, that his numerous faculties may have scope for exercise.

It is true that children who are habitually unoccupied want to be eating continually; it is also true that by presenting artistic pleasures and pursuits to young people, the gross or objectionable ceases to attract them.

A sense of responsibility is almost the foundation of character, and occupation affords a fine opportunity for its development. Every member of a family should daily be responsible for some effort which should conduce to the comfort, convenience or pleasure of the household. There are many duties children can perform in a home where there is but one maid-of-all-work, or possibly none at all. The wise mother will take advantage of such conditions to establish habits of industry and consideration in the child. Young children should be allowed to spend by far the greater part of their time in play; but while the greatest possible liberty should be permitted children in their recreations, we should bear in mind that, as one author has expressed it, "Lawlessness and ungoverned caprice during play

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hours are the foundation of misuse of civic freedom."

A sympathetic mother can introduce much of the play spirit into work which the child might otherwise regard as a hardship. I know a mother who was unexpectedly left without a cook, one baking day, and had her hands more than usually full. She had four children, a boy of ten, a girl of eight, another of six, and a baby boy of ten months. Calling the three eldest to her, she said, "You are accustomed to a good time to-day (it was Saturday), and I'm sorry to interfere with your plans, but mamma will be very tired if she has to do all the work to-day, and she has decided to ask you to help her. Suppose we make a game of the work and pretend this house is a great big ship bound for Liverpool, and that we are the crew. You, Arthur, can be the captain, the steward and a sailor by turns; you, Kate, can be the stewardess part of the time; I will be the cook, and then, after our work is done, Kate and I will be great lady passengers and sit on the deck—that is the piazza, you know—and talk to the captain. Margery can be shipwrecked on an island over there under the apple tree; she can

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swing the baby in a hammock and play at camping until Arthur rescues her."

All drudgery was soon transformed by the spirit of play infused into it, and not only were the children most helpful, but they added considerably to their store of domestic knowledge.

In a hundred ways work can be made to seem like play, but the thoughtful mother will not fail to sound a subtle note of duty through it all. Arthur, as sailor, did certain things, because, under the circumstances, it was his *duty* to do them; Kate made the beds, dusted the furniture and set the table because they were the *duties* which accompanied her position, and it was clearly Margery's *duty* not to desert her baby brother on the island, but to try to be a little mother to him. We all know the truth of the adage, "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," and so we should never turn a deaf ear to "Mamma, what can I do?" ✓

In a former chapter I specified certain occupations and materials for young children; at present my aim is to emphasize the importance of occupation. I would ask each woman who may read this article, to spend an hour alone,

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and, after calm reflection, to write a brief description of an average day in her own life and the lives of her children: what they do and what she does. It may be written on any kind of paper, without any effort at rhetorical effect; a simple statement of facts will do, but any comment you may make on the facts will be most welcome to me. You may, in your quiet hour, gain fresh wisdom and light on your path, and be glad to embody them in a message to other mothers.

The right form of occupation for children is that which leads to the development of all their faculties. In early childhood the greater part of such training can be given through the beautiful kindergarten method, beginning with the *Mottoes and Commentaries of Froebel's Mother Play* by Miss Susan Blow. As children grow older, proper stimulus and incentive should be introduced as substitutes for the spirit of play. Children should be given opportunities to express themselves through the work of their hands; it is surprising how varied will often be the tastes and talents in a single family.

The care of animals is a valuable form of oc-

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cupation, since failure in providing food, water or shelter entails physical suffering; such suffering appeals to a child's sympathy, and his sense of responsibility is thereby increased.

To send children on errands and with verbal messages (where no serious inconvenience can result if the message gets twisted) is an excellent form of occupation, especially if the child be taught concentration and the habit of attention by having the message given him only once and then being made to repeat it to see if he has heard it correctly.

Children's powers of concentration, instead of being strengthened, are daily weakened by the constant repetition in their presence of things they should remember without assistance. One idea of civic duty can early be engendered by giving a boy some work to do in connection with the care of yard or grounds, and impressing him with the justice of properly destroying or disposing of all rubbish rather than sweeping it out into the street, as is still customary in some of the rural districts. The occupations of girls and boys should be of a character to fit them for intelligent living, and to make them conversant



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with the practical details of everyday life. Our observation of parents deepens the conviction that no study should take precedence over that of child nature and the wisest methods of child culture.

Children should be taught through their occupations the necessity for conservation of power; if more strength or energy is used than is requisite in this direction or that, the sooner will the supply be exhausted. The importance, too, of obedience can easily be shown them; for instance, one child will fret and fume and lose time, strength and patience over an allotted task which another child will quickly and willingly perform. The former child, if left to himself, is apt to develop into a rebellious man or woman who rails at fate, and grows pessimistic with advancing years, instead of promptly discharging the duties nearest him. Occupation should afford full opportunity for the exercise of the moral emotions and affections, as in work done in a spirit of helpfulness for father, mother or other member of the family, for neighbors, friends or those in distress of any kind. The thoughtful father and mother will constantly be on the alert for occasions which afford the right exercise of

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their children's faculties, and observation will demonstrate to them that pleasure accompanies the legitimate exercise of a faculty.

Carlyle said, "Blessed is he who has found his work." All are not so fortunate as to labor in the field they like best, but all who think must admit the steadying influence exercised by work, and its inestimable value in seasons of bereavement and great mental depression. It is through observation of the lives of adults that we obtain our most impressive object lessons.

Religion and work should always be united. Without work, religion is apt to retrograde into a dreamy sentiment; while without religion, work loses its most vital inspiration. Necessity can spur one on to the accomplishment of great tasks, but the greatest joy in work is attained when the individual works not only *for* God, but *with* God.

One mother daily refers to God's "great plan" in such a way that her children, young though they are, already manifest a joy in service which is amazing to the uninitiated. Very simply but earnestly she helps them to realize that if they

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are doing the best they can, they are truly serving God.

All service ranks the same with God,  
There is no last or first.

Every task, however simple,  
Sets the soul that does it free.

## CHAPTER XX

### ADOLESCENCE

The dictionary defines the general term "adolescence" as "the state of growing, specifically youth; or the period of life between puberty and the full development of the frame, extending in man from about the age of fourteen years to twenty-five, and in women from twelve to twenty-one; applied almost exclusively to the young of the human race." At eight years of age the brain has acquired almost its adult size and weight, health is excellent, activity was never greater or more varied, and there is abundance of endurance and vitality. The child is interested in many things, likes to play all manner of games, to romp, climb trees, frolic with animals, race with the dogs, and to go on excursions away from home, picnics, etc. It is singularly fearless as to physical danger in sport, and the spectacle is familiar of children of eight or ten who acquire mastery of a bicycle in a few hours, without having shown even a momentary

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fear; I am referring, of course, to the normally healthy child. The perception is very acute at this age, and physically the child seems almost immune to accident or the results of exposure as well as blind to much moral evil.

Dr. G. Stanley Hall, in his remarkable book, *Adolescence*, says: "The child revels in savagery, and if its tribal, predatory, hunting, fishing, fighting, roving, idle, playing proclivities could be indulged in the country, under conditions that now, alas, seem hopelessly ideal, they could conceivably be organized and directed so as to be far more truly humanistic and liberal than all that the best school can provide."

Instead of a life in the country our complex civilization demands that the child shall be placed in school. I am rejoiced to see that the consensus of medical opinion now names eight as the earliest age at which a child should be placed in school, and agrees that there should be but one session a day; namely, a morning one from 9 to 12:30, or, better still, to 12, with frequent intervals of rest, recreation or relaxing, stretching exercises. From eight years of age to twelve or fourteen the mind is wonderfully

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plastic, the senses are keen and the power for memorizing greater than it will probably ever be again.

Dr. Hall says: "It is the age of external and mechanical training; musical technique, foreign tongues and their pronunciation, the manipulation of numbers and of geometrical elements, and many kinds of skill have now their golden hour." The greatest care must be exercised, however, that the child's education be not pushed at the expense of physical vitality.

As children come near to puberty their physical condition should receive the closest attention. Boys grow so rapidly at this time that they are peculiarly liable to certain diseases, especially of the nervous system, and constant thought should be directed to their exercise, work, food and rest. The chief concern of many mothers seems to be to avoid infectious diseases. They should give more time to building up and maintaining a high standard of general health by improving the child's nutrition through proper feeding and intelligent care. Definite knowledge along these lines is of far greater value to the individual, and to the race, than the majority of branches now

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considered so important in the educational world.

There is a great increase in the growth of the bones just before and after puberty; hence the importance of guarding against any excessive strain or tension which may result in various curvatures. Dr. Hall says the muscles should be used enough to keep up with the bones, but not enough to cause contraction, which is a result of undue fatigue, for unequal or abnormal contraction may warp the bones. High pillows, sleeping in one position, ill-adjusted seats at school or on the bicycle, tight lacing, occupations that strain or confine the body or require unnatural positions, are especially to be avoided.

Adolescent boys and girls who are growing rapidly are occasionally ashamed of their height and inclined to stoop. The injurious effect of such a posture should be explained to them, and they should be continually corrected, until the habit is overcome. Chest power increases but little from eleven to thirteen; there is marked increase from fourteen to sixteen. Children of this age are often pressed hard at school, and do much studying at home, with the consequence that the impulse of chest growth natural at this

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period is impeded and cannot accomplish Nature's purpose. The lungs cannot thus attain the size and elasticity they would under favorable conditions. Dr. Hall remarks, quoting Key, that where children grow slowly owing to hard conditions during their earlier years, they may catch up later and end their growth with others who have been more favored. All who have weighed and measured children with a view to information on this point, have noted a certain elastic tendency, at least to resume, if not to complete, interrupted or delayed growth, somewhat as the emaciation of disease is compensated for by increase of weight on return to health.

Dr. Hall further says: "Retardation of growth by poverty is most marked in Italy and England and least so in the United States." It is universally conceded that increase of comfort increases stature and weight. Quetelet first demonstrated this by comparing the measurements of factory children with those of others more favored. Key concludes that in nearly all lands "the weak period of development before puberty is lengthened for the poorer children to their cost."

It is a common saying in connection with some



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simple physical infirmity, "Oh, he will outgrow it." This belief has a scientific basis, for, again quoting Dr. Hall, "Adolescence is the age of *re-construction*, when new determinants come to the front, and also the point of departure for new lines of development. It is the age, too, when, if ever, previous tendencies to abnormality may be overcome, both by nature and by treatment." Heredity asserts itself, and the adolescent is apt to reflect characteristic mental states and physical attributes of his parents. I think, however, that the word heredity should almost be barred from the hearing of youth, as it so often forms a pretext for ill-doing. The proper training of youth in individual responsibility and individual effort, under favorable conditions, will conquer heredity of evil character, as surely as tendencies to physical infirmities may be overcome through intelligent hygienic living. Swimming is considered an especially good exercise, at this period, and cool baths in moderation are advisable. As much time as possible should be spent in the open air.

There are wonderful changes occurring in the physical structure at this time, and the mental

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state is correspondingly perturbed. The boy or girl loses interest in former childish pursuits and is attracted by the society and occupations of adults. They are no longer content with "making believe." They want to really accomplish things, to do and to be. They are filled with vague yearnings, ambitions, hopes; they dream great dreams, long to astonish the world with some stupendous deed, and are mystified by the strength and variableness of their own emotions. They alternate between elation and depression, egotism and self-depreciation, selfishness and unselfishness, bombastic courage and a sudden inexplicable shrinking which is almost cowardice but usually springs from a different source.

The budding conscience which appeared about the fourth year, and which, through its expansion, has led the boy to do without protest what his parents, his teacher or society required, now feels a need for some other guide to conduct, some explanation of human life and its phenomena. Truly has this period of life been designated as a "second birth." The earlier years have been filled with external objects and physical growth and needs, and now the soul seems to spring

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into conscious activity and to assert its sovereignty over the mind and heart. This is the time for the development of altruism, of the ideal, of all that is noble and fine and great in human character. The mind is marvellously receptive to suggestion, the brain quick to perceive, the muscles to act. If evil inclinations manifest themselves, counteract their influence, not by dwelling upon them, but by putting something else in their place in the form of occupation or amusement. Someone has said: "We grow toward goodness rather by pulling ourselves up to it, than by pushing ourselves away from evil."

Parents and educators should bear constantly in mind that with the arrival of adolescence there occurs a revolution in the child's life which marks a critical epoch, and one which calls for the exercise of their highest wisdom, patience and sympathy. At the first birth and while the new and helpless being is becoming adjusted to its environment, while it is conscious only of physical pleasure or discomfort, it is a common sight to see parents and even entire households lavish time, thought and affection on the dear baby, while at the second birth, or advent of adoles-

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cence, when tenderness and loving insight are most needed, the boy or girl often experiences real mental anguish through positive neglect, indifference or misunderstanding. It is said that no age is so responsive to all the best and wisest adult endeavor as the decade between fourteen and twenty-four. The awakened soul seems to join forces, as it were, with all the good influences in the environment of youth, that it may progress toward an ever higher development.

There is no neutral ground, no standing still during this period of adolescence; it is growth, expansion, assimilation, mental, moral and physical. The active mind must be nourished with proper ideals or it will assimilate the ignoble; the body must have abundant exercise or the force which craves expression will turn inward and prey upon itself, while morbid questionings and conditions will arise which will undermine the constitution and eventually lead to disease and premature decay of all the faculties. To be kept healthily busy amid cheerful surroundings is the best antidote to the abnormal mental tendencies so prevalent in boys and girls of this age.

Charles H. Morse, head master of the Rindge

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Manual Training School, Cambridge, Mass., writes: "From ten years' observation, I have no hesitation in saying that were I a guardian of a boy with vicious instincts, I should get him at work with both hands and mind at once, and feel that there are few boys who could not be saved by such a training as is given by our manual training schools."

It is natural that boys and girls should enjoy the companionship of one another, and this in moderation and under proper surveillance they should have.

The spirit of organization is especially strong in adolescent boys. This is the opportunity for interesting a boy in the civic life of his city, and in the still larger organization of national government. Mr. George's "Junior Republic" and the "School Cities" of Mr. Wilson Gill testify to the value of this organization spirit in the development of character in regard to public relations.

Dr. O'Shea, referring to the religious phase of adolescence, says: "Adolescent religious instruction should relate more to action, to doing, than to speculation. What the boy particularly

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should hear in the Sunday-school should have reference mainly to worthy tasks to be undertaken in the world, great deeds to be done. But, not realizing the nature of the adolescent boy, teachers have presented religion as the source of peace and rest, rather than as the armor with which hard battles are to be fought, and in the course of events the young man drifts away from the Sunday-school because there is more in the world outside that appeals to his love of action, of daring, of bravery, and of enterprise."

According to statistics the majority of conversions occur between the ages of eight and twenty. This, along with all the other facts relating to adolescence, is of importance to parents and educators. Religious instruction of the right kind emphasized in the lives of those who impart it, will seldom fail profoundly to impress the boy or girl at some period of adolescence, and their conversion will prove the strongest possible barrier against the various temptations which await them on every side as they go through life.

In a single comparatively brief chapter it is difficult to convey any adequate idea even of the magnitude of such a subject as adolescence, much

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less to treat it comprehensively. Many volumes have been written on the subject, and to the real student of child nature these are more fascinating than any work of fiction could be.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE CHOICE OF OCCUPATION

Life consists in making choices, and it is the ability to make proper selection, whether it be in so simple a matter as buying a gown or so complex a question as entering a profession, that constitutes wisdom. In no case are reason and observation—the faculties upon which the majority of people must depend in making their choices—taxed more than in deciding what occupation is to absorb most of their lives and yield them in return a livelihood.

Every day we see men and women to whom the illustration of the “round peg in the square hole” is applicable and who are failures because they are not pursuing the vocations best adapted to them. Every day fathers and mothers are asking themselves and each other, What is the best vocation for my son? In what occupation can my daughter be trained in order that she may be self-supporting, should she be thrown on her own resources? This question, so often delayed



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until the boy has reached his twenties, and the girl is well on in her teens, should be asked while the child is still in the nursery. With ample material at his disposal in the way of blocks, paints, pencils, scissors, paper, garden tools, string, bits of leather, simple carpenter's tools, books, a musical instrument or two, etc., a future architect, artist, designer, agriculturist, musician or author may manifest decided taste in any of these directions at as early an age as six or eight years. Study the child and discover where his greatest interest lies, then test the depth of that interest by the child's power of concentration on his favorite occupation.

I know a little girl of ten who is exceedingly fond of drawing or painting, and who would cheerfully work for hours with brush and pencil were her mother not wise enough to insist upon abundant outdoor life. While out walking after a heavy and unusually beautiful fall of snow, she suddenly stopped, and exclaimed in an awed and breathless voice, "Oh, mamma, if I could only paint all this! I wonder if I ever can."

"Yes, dear," her mother replied, "I am sure you can. Just persevere as you are doing now,

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and you can paint many of the beautiful things you see."

There will be hard work for this child before she even faintly realizes her ideals, but though there may be moments of discouragement, there will be no drudgery—there can be none where the interest is so vital. This child is to have every opportunity given her for the development of her artistic taste, which is so marked as to warrant a belief that she has talent, possibly a spark of genius.

There is often a mistaken tendency on the part of parents and educators to overwork a child who shows decided ability in any special direction. This tendency is often responsible for the falling off in interest noticeable in many children who early gave evidence of unusual aptness in some special occupation. It is demoralizing to a child to allow him to throw aside unfinished tasks, but, on the other hand, the parent or teacher should be careful not to set lessons or tasks of such length as to tax the child unduly, as in such event the child's enthusiasm gradually leaves him and he may even acquire a positive distaste for the very thing in which he gave the greatest promise.

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From eight to fourteen, children acquire habits of application and study, and as they are necessarily unable to comprehend the full importance of such habits, a conflict of the child's will with that of his caretakers is neither surprising nor should it be distressing. The main thing is to be firm, and at the same time sympathetic, endeavoring to make the child feel that every step taken is necessary for his own good. A little girl who was very averse to studying her French verbs was overheard to say to her companion: "Yes, I did hate those old verbs, but I can never learn to speak French without them, and a friend of my mamma's, who has just come from Paris, said she was so glad that she had learned to speak French, for she had no trouble talking to the shopkeepers, and she had a trunkful of *beautiful* clothes." Not a very high incentive, you may say, to acquire a language, but it served to stimulate her interest, and she is now an admirable French scholar and is grateful for this chance remark of her mamma's friend.

Perhaps, when one thinks of choosing an occupation for a son or daughter in childhood, one is governed largely by his or her own experience.

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Quite often we hear the expression, "Oh, I hate this or that, because when I was a child I was made to do it." However, perhaps even more often we hear the lament, "I wish I had been made to persevere in this or that direction when I was a child; then I might have amounted to something." A fine organist of whom I know began as a child with the greatest disinclination to practice—so much so that he frequently sat obstinately refusing to touch the piano. His mother sat patiently beside him, insisting that he should spend the allotted time at the piano, whether he touched it or not. Soon, of course, finding that he must sit there, he began to practice, and he has ended by finding music his chief relaxation in a busy life, and blesses his mother for her wise perseverance. I am of the opinion that such persistence with a child must commence very young, otherwise resistance may be found too strong and a disagreeable conflict of wills may result. Most children show at least a slight inclination in some direction. It seems to me wise to insist on a little more persevering attention given in that direction from its earliest manifestation, so that by the time a child is twelve years old much will have been accom-

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plished, the worst stage of drudgery passed, and the child will be ready to make enthusiastic progress. A little boy I knew, at eight years of age, had a wonderful knowledge of butterflies, being able to classify scientifically most of those he caught. This apparently showed the child's vocation to be that of a naturalist. In other instances such interest might result in only temporary amusement, but who can say?

If a child of nervous temperament and delicate physique manifests a decided preference for a sedentary occupation, prefers, for instance, reading or drawing, his interest should be systematically developed in outdoor sports, manual training, etc. Such a child can best be reached through the law of suggestion; fire his imagination by stories of the ancient Greeks and their splendid physical development, show him the advantage of being able to wield intelligently a few carpenter's tools, to pitch a tent, ride a horse, swim and row; in other words, be sure that his body has as much or more attention than his brain. Just in proportion as this vigilance is exercised up to fourteen will capacity be stored, which will result in amazing progress later on in any chosen profession or

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occupation. The favorite pursuit is by no means to be ignored. It is simply not to be allowed to absorb the body-building energy which should be especially free to accomplish its work, between the ages of eight and fourteen. I have heard of one boy of delicate physique who showed a decidedly legal turn of mind, but whose interest was adroitly enlisted in the study of pecan culture to such an extent that he gave up his intention of studying law, and is now the owner of one of the largest pecan groves in the Southwest. From a delicate youth, with an inherited tendency to physical weakness, he has become a robust, finely developed man. He has read law, and still has a strong inclination in that direction, but so wedded has he become to his outdoor life that he long ago gave up all idea of the law as a vocation.

Every girl and every boy should, if possible, be given the opportunity to acquire a trade or profession and at least one accomplishment. In the matter of accomplishment probably none affords greater pleasure and relaxation to the adult than music, and unless there be unmistakable and continued aversion to it, parents should persevere

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in the training of their children in this art, which throughout life will exercise an elevating influence on their character and associations.

If parents gave to the careful study of their children one-half the earnest thought that they bestow on matters of comparatively minor importance, we should see far fewer "round pegs in square holes," and *vice versa*. There is no lack of parental love, and parents think continually about their children's interests; but the effective thought is that which is concentrated on a study of the child himself, his temperament, with its needs, limitations, etc.

One mother told me that, when only six or seven years of age, her little son had manifested the greatest interest in ships and water-craft of every description. She discovered this taste quite accidentally while looking over a new picture-book with him. As their home was in the interior and he had never seen anything but a rowboat on a mill-pond, the mother was rather surprised at his enthusiasm, and determined that as soon as he was nine or ten years of age she would take him to the nearest port, to see real vessels. In the meantime she gave him such toy ships as she could

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afford, a little set of tools and some light building materials, with all the pictures of sailing vessels, steamships, tugs, etc., obtainable. Immediately he began to construct all kinds of watercraft for himself, and spent innumerable happy hours in this work, and in testing its results on the creek in a meadow adjoining his home. When, at about the age of eleven, he visited a seaport town and was taken by a kind old sea-captain over the numerous vessels in the harbor, he was wild with delight, and then and there declared that he wanted to be a ship-builder. It is almost needless to add that he attained the highest success and distinction in his chosen profession.



## CHAPTER XXII

### CHARACTER BUILDING

Feeling, knowing, willing, doing—these are the four great currents of human life which unite in the wondrous stream of character and flow on toward the ocean of eternity. It is of great advantage if the source of these streams be pure, if angels of righteousness, in the garb of good motives, stand ever on guard at the fountain-heads of being.

Feeling forms a large part of our physical and mental life. Through feeling we are conscious of ourselves and our environment. We feel warm or cold or hungry, sick or well, hopeful or despairing, melancholy or gay, amiable or perverse, affectionate and confiding or jealous and suspicious. The very young child lives in the realm of feeling. His bodily sensations are those about which he knows most; he is comfortable or uncomfortable as he is properly or improperly nourished and cared for. There is no effort at repression of any of his emotions. His feelings of

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pleasure, pain, surprise, anger, affection or mirthfulness are expressed with the utmost spontaneity regardless of circumstance or personality. For instance, a teething baby will fret and cry aloud, no matter how distressing the sound may be to its perhaps dangerously ill mother, and yet no one could call the baby selfish or inconsiderate; but, on the other hand, the unruly boy of eight who continues with some boisterous indoor game after being told that the noise is bad for his sick mother, shows a lack of right feeling, which calls for the most judicious management. The difference between the infant and the boy is that difference which is as vast as all creation, the difference between ignorance and knowledge. The baby does not know; the boy does.

Following knowledge, comes willing, and then doing. If the child is clear in his mind as to what is right for him to do, and he fails to do it, then he is doing worse than standing still—he is retrograding. Poor little chap! he is missing an opportunity to strengthen himself for the conflicts later on when victory or defeat will possess a significance far beyond the ken of his childish brain. May we not lose sight of our own

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impatience and irritability with him in the sense of our great opportunity to help him?

For centuries the cry of earnest, prayerful, resolute parents has been, "How can we *make* our boys and girls into men and women of fine, strong character?" To-day, this very moment, myriads of men and women are crying out in their souls, "How can we *help* our sons and daughters to develop as they should?" In the past the burden rested with the parents; to-day they share it with their children, and the partnership is so sweet, the burden of character development so inexpressibly precious. If mamma has been impatient, she gathers her little brood about her and tells them she is so sorry for the impatient words—such words are always wrong, no matter who says them; will they help her to be patient, will they come quickly to her side and kiss her if they think she feels troubled or cross? Such mothers and fathers will say to their children, "I am sure you want to be brave, true, strong men and women." And, best of all, they will strive with might and main to be brave and true and strong themselves, that they may look into their children's eyes and say, "This way is best; it seems

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hard, but you will be glad some day." The very foundation of character is sincerity—honesty and truthfulness are but other names for the same thing—and if parents continually set their children an example of insincerity, of what avail are sermons and maxims from their lips? In every way children fashion their conduct after that of the adults about them. If you will note carefully, your observation will confirm my statement. I should have said more especially, young children. A little girl whose mother habitually lost her temper at the telephone began to use the same tone with her companions and dolls—an object-lesson the mother was wise enough to take quickly to heart, endeavoring to undo the mischief her own weakness had wrought in her child. Alas, the evil is not always recognized in time to be remedied.

Biography is an excellent aid in character-building. Children want to be like their heroes; simply written lives of truly great men and women are wonderfully stimulating to childish endeavor to live up to an ideal.

Parents should be ever ready with the smile of recognition, a glad "Oh, John, I am so happy

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to see that you are really trying to do as your father wishes," or, "Nellie, it was very sweet in you to be so patient with your little sisters this morning; I can never tell you what a comfort you are to me." Do not those words go further toward establishing in John and Nellie the beautiful attributes of respect and patience than any number of lectures would accomplish? There are those who object to praise or encouragement, on the ground that it weakens rather than strengthens character. Praise that lacks the ring of sincerity will harm, but a word or a glance—it need not be more—of recognition of honest effort can never harm, and may be most lasting in its effect for good.

Ask yourself where you can do and be your best. Is it not in an atmosphere of friends who have faith in you, who not only love you, but who believe that you are all that your soul in its best moments longs to be? Volumes might be made from the articles that have been written on character building, and yet a comparatively few words will suffice to cover all that you or I need know concerning that which is most vital in the development of our children's

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characters. Let us be honest with ourselves, first of all. Are we patient, respectful, polite, sincere, reverent, diligent, prompt, persevering, painstaking, appreciative, receptive, hopeful, consistent, tender, affectionate, decisive and courageous? It is a long list of qualities, but it takes all those and others to make up a rounded and symmetrical character. If you find yourself deficient in this or that attribute, do not be discouraged. You can be what you will, and you can make of your very shortcomings a means of discipline and development.

Fortunate are the children whose training and environment are such as to establish habits of all the virtues, who are trained in habits of reverence, honesty, courtesy, etc. Habit is indeed "ten natures," and will stand by one under stress and strain that would weaken the average moral fibre; hence, it behooves us each day to see that uninterrupted habit has an opportunity to perform its marvellous work in the moral nature and in the wonderful brain cells which register with such unerring accuracy all that is said and done.

From the practical viewpoint of everyday life, there are several elements of character that go far

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toward enabling their possessor to achieve a lasting and legitimate success in life. First I should place honesty—and here let me remind parents that many children are dishonest through ignorance; they literally do not realize the serious nature of dishonesty, and cannot see why it is worse to tell a falsehood, or even take change from a forbidden purse, than to tear their clothing through carelessness or to be overbearing and insolent with a subordinate. Such children need to be given object-lessons in simple justice, and it should be clearly shown them on what a tottering basis their own cherished possessions and plans would rest if dishonesty were the rule rather than the exception.

One mother used the following illustration with her boy of seven, whose falsehoods were not of the fictitious character due to a vivid imagination, but on one or two occasions had been of a deliberate order with unpleasant consequences to others. She said, "It is very, *very* wrong to tell falsehoods, Arthur. Suppose Uncle James should come here in a carriage to take you out to the farm and the maid should tell him you were not at home, to spite you for playing tricks

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upon her the other day; would you not feel very angry with her, and would it not seem a dreadful thing to you for her to have told such a story? And yet you did almost the same thing the other day. Will you promise to come to mother when you feel like telling a story? I will not scold you, dear, but we will talk it over, and I know my little boy loves his white, shining shield of truth too much to let even one little black story rest on it."

The white, shining shield of truth so appealed to his imagination that thereafter each night he would ask his mother if she saw any little black spots on his "white, shining shield," and when she would reply with a sweet glance deep down into his eyes, "I do not see any spots on the outside, Arthur, but God and you are the only ones who know about the inside of the shield," he would nestle up close to her and say, "The inside is all right, mamma"; and thus was quickly eradicated a noisome weed which in a less carefully tended garden might have grown apace and choked the fair blossoms about it.

Next to honesty I should place decision. Many a man and woman fail for lack of this quality.



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They are energetic, capable and willing, but they let opportunities slip past them because they cannot decide what is best until the opportunities are gone and they realize too late the price their vacillation has cost. The boy is truly "father to the man"; let him make decisions wherever practicable, and teach him to abide by them. In a hundred small ways he can be trained to make choice of material things, and the exercise of decision in this direction will enable him the more quickly to make a wise choice in matters of greater moment. If he is purchasing cravats, give him so many minutes to decide which he will take, and caution him against ever expressing a verbal regret once his choice is made. Do not let him hover about the counter while his parcel is being wrapped, but see that he turns resolutely away and interests himself with other goods. Again, if he has decided, after careful thought and consultation, that he would rather spend the Summer vacation at the seashore with his aunt than on the farm with his uncle, do not let him change his plans at the last minute, even though he may have changed his mind. Such training will enable him to acquire habits of self-reliance and

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save him the miseries of that mental see-saw, "Shall I do this or shall I do that?" To-day it is this, to-morrow it is that, until resolution grows weak and inaction spreads its sickly hue over every mental concept.

Next in order should come punctuality, which includes consideration for others, courtesy, and several virtues beside. It is a lesson best taught and longest remembered by allowing the pupil to experience the unpleasant consequences of tardiness. I know one little girl who became the soul of punctuality in a single day. Her mother and father had planned to take her down the river on an afternoon excursion. On account of her tardiness they missed the boat by five minutes. Before they left home her mother knew they would be too late, but she and her husband took the long ride on a hot July day at two o'clock in order that the little daughter they so tenderly loved might be spared the disappointments and serious inconvenience that would attend her all through life unless she overcame a habit of tardiness, which had developed during a long visit with an aunt who was under the mistaken im-

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pression that to teach a child punctuality it was necessary to assume all responsibility in the case, and to begin to remind her an hour before the time for departure that she must really be ready to leave in a few minutes. The little girl in question, I hardly need add, received no scolding. The fact that her tardiness had been the cause of disappointment not only to herself but to her mother and father as well emphasized her lesson as no mere words could have done.

A final word as to perseverance, for it is the veritable keystone of the arch of endeavor. Watch your boys and girls ; if they begin things, whether it be a fort in the sand at the seashore, fashioned by baby fingers, or things of greater consequence undertaken at school and at home, see that they finish them, and try as far as practicable to establish the habit of completing one thing before another is undertaken. On the other hand, train your children to leave their work as promptly and thoroughly as their play. Everywhere one sees men and women whose to-days are darkened by the shadows of yesterday's and to-morrow's burdens.

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In conclusion, let us help our children to a full comprehension of the lines :

No work is futile that is nobly planned;  
No deed is little if but greatly done.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT IN THE HOME

"Know ye not that ye are the temples of the living God?"

How few there are, comparatively, who ever realize the wonderful significance of that message, and even to those few the comprehension seldom comes until the shadows of life are lengthening. If we could fill our own and our children's minds with this beautiful thought, what harmony of soul and body would manifest itself in our daily lives! What a very Heaven upon earth would be our homes.

Evil thoughts, evil words and actions, all things that would defile the "temple," we should strive with fresh zeal to resist, if from our earliest childhood we had been taught the sacredness of the "temple." Parables, images, symbols, appeal to the childish mind, and children learn far more readily from illustration than from maxims and counsel. We none of us like to be "preached at," and in the religious training of the little ones

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we must have a direct purpose, but work for its accomplishment with unapparent methods. Who has not heard a little child sigh when some older person with more zeal than discretion stops reading a story at some interesting crisis to emphasize in wordy, tedious fashion the moral which the childish mind has already grasped—at least, as much of the moral as it can assimilate?

The object of religious training is to enable the child to recognize the divine laws, and to learn to obey them. These are not matters of creeds and doctrines, which vary and bear more or less the human imprint, but are the messages that we hear when we listen to the inner voice. Even young children can be made to understand that this voice is not one we hear with the physical sense of hearing, but it is a voice that speaks to our minds and souls, and the more earnestly we listen and long to do its lightest bidding the clearer will be its message to us. Christian life in the home requires that the child should be started right, that he should be given, as one author expresses it, "right primary ideas on the great relations and duties of life." In no way can he obtain these as through the conversation

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and conduct of his elders. These directly influence his heart and imagination, and his standards of right and wrong are unconsciously fashioned after the pattern thus set. If he hears no harsh, unjust criticism of others, it is not difficult to impress him with the majesty and justice of the command "Judge not."

If those who compose his home circle have high ideals, are reverent, sincere, kind, thoughtful, his mind and soul will assimilate their good thoughts and deeds as surely as his body assimilates the nourishing food so carefully supplied to him three times each day. I know a mother who never gives her children material food but that she ministers to the soul as well. She does it so simply, so naturally; it may be she says only "Oh, children, how happy we ought to be on this beautiful day God has given us"; or, if the ground is covered with snow, "How glad the little seeds and bulbs must be that the earth is covered with a beautiful big blanket of snow which keeps out all the cold winds"; or, again, while looking at a violet, "How many beautiful flowers God has placed in the world."

Matthew Arnold said, "Education is an atmos-

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phere, a discipline, a life"; these words would serve equally to define religion, and if this atmosphere be one of faith in God, of confidence in one another, of mutual love and service, the highest ideals of daily living are not far from attainment, and the great feature of such an atmosphere is that it is not dependent upon worldly conditions, but can pervade the humblest, plainest dwelling. It is only in such an atmosphere that the true spirit of home abides. People have houses in which they stay, but they cannot be called homes unless they are full of "peace and good-will."

"Open me the gates of righteousness that I may go in unto them," so would lisp the little child if he realized his inheritance, and we who should open wide those gates for him—how often we prove the very stumbling-blocks in his path! One of the most pathetic sights is the spectacle of a boy or girl whose quickened conscience is striving to reconcile the conduct of his parents with their professions. Conscience is defined as that spiritual sense whereby we have knowledge of good and evil. Knowledge and reason are requisite for the development of conscience, since



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history is full of the crimes which have been committed at the instigation of ignorant, untrained consciences. There is no better guide to the conscience than the "Golden Rule," and its precepts are so simple that any mind can grasp them.

Regard must always be had for the ignorance of the childish conscience, as has been said. "Children often commit serious offences against truth, modesty, love, and do not know that they have done wrong, while some feather-weight of transgression oppresses their souls." Conscience, as all other faculties, requires training and direction.

Only recently I heard a gentleman of eighty-five years of age speak with a shudder of the hours of boyish agony he experienced in his fear of eternal punishment for the commission of some trifling offence. Never teach a child that God is a God of wrath; teach him of God's love, and of Christ's wonderful and beautiful life. Have you not heard a mother or nurse say to a child, "God does not love you; you are a wicked, bad boy and you are sure to go to the bad place?" Imagine a child's conception of a God thus represented. The Christian life in the home em-

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braces family prayers in the morning and a quiet good-night prayer with mother before the final good-night kiss and "tucking away" which children so dearly love. It calls for patience at all times, courage in adversity and faith and sweetness in affliction.

A dear mother I knew, while making Sunday different from other days by the special Bible readings and church attendance, always used her best and prettiest china for Sunday evening tea, and it was the one day in the week in which the children were allowed to eat candy. She never forgot to purchase a little store of sweets on Saturday, saying she wished to associate in their childish minds as many happy memories of the day as possible.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." To my mind it is far better for children to be taught this than that Heaven is some far-away place which they cannot see until they die. Children are sensitive beings; they are ill at ease when they have deliberately done wrong, and they are correspondingly happy when they have been reasonably good, hence it is not a difficult matter to explain to them the meaning of "The Kingdom

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of Heaven is within you." "The Spirit of Christ bringeth peace and joy unspeakable."

A little boy said, "How am I to know He is come, mother?" When you are quite gentle, sweet and happy, it is because Christ is within.

And when He comes  
He makes your face so fair;  
Your friends are glad,  
And say, "The King is there."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WITH THE CHILDREN

As the Christmastide approaches, if we were gifted with the power to hear what is said all over the Christian world, I am sure that "Christmas" in many languages is the word we should hear far oftener than any other. Not only is it uttered in joyous anticipation by myriads of childish voices, but it is on the lips of adults as well. A season that should be fraught with peace in every household often becomes, by reason of its imaginary material obligations, a time of hurry, worry and anxious care. This is all unnecessary, for the two main disturbing factors in the Christmas problem, namely, the effort to do what we imagine others expect of us, and our inability to do this as well as the many things we would really like to do, are both absolutely within our control. No one has any right to expect of us what it would be an injustice to ourselves and others to attempt, and we have no right to repine because we cannot do what we desire.

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The exchange of gifts at Christmas, originally a simple, pretty custom, serving as an expression of good-will when the hearts of mankind are especially drawn toward one another, has become in many instances an exacting burden that robs the season of much of its beautiful significance and leaves little time either for serious reflection or for true social enjoyment. How often childish ears hear the phrase "Oh, dear, I don't know what to give Mrs. ——. She always gives me something; I wish she would not, for I really cannot afford to go outside my own family this year." It is more than probable that Mrs. — has expressed herself in a similar manner in the privacy of her own family, and yet, because one or the other lacks the courage to stop, the senseless exchange of gifts will continue.

How many useless presents are made, what sums of money lavished, and in many instances with what poor return either in appreciation or enjoyment. We all know of children whose parents, relatives and friends shower gifts so numerous and beautiful that the little ones are wearied and surfeited by them. Many, indeed, have not only their needs but their desires so fully

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gratified that it is difficult to determine just how to add the charm of novelty.

One form of enjoyment there is which even the most cynical do not attempt to underrate—it is that of making others happy; and if children are to derive the full blessedness from Christmas, they must be taken into the confidence of their elders and allowed to share in the plans for the enjoyment of others. One mother I knew gathered her little family together in the latter part of November, and told them she wished to give them half the money she usually devoted to their gifts, with the understanding that they would spend it for the benefit of those less fortunate than themselves. They demurred a little at first, but one shopping expedition with mamma, one hour of busy planning and making memoranda, and it would have been hard to find more enthusiastic appreciation of any project. And there was much to be done by this mamma and her bright-eyed aides. Delicately but persistently they endeavored to find out many things about which they had never before thought or cared. They had to learn all about the children of the extra laundress who came two days in the week, and who was

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always so quiet and genteel; there were five of those children, and their ages and sizes had to be transferred to paper, so that the shoes and clothes and hats would fit, and the sprinkling of toys in the big hamper be adapted to each child. And they had to make inquiries about the little seamstress, and about the others whom they wished to remember, so as to please all.

One may well exclaim, "But there are so many needy people, so many whose lives directly and indirectly touch mine, and giving in such fashion means such tedious shopping expeditions." Try it this Christmas and see if you are not mistaken. Be sure to take the children with you, and with their and your own memoranda for reference you will find that the morning or afternoon has flown by and that you are all in an exultant glow at the dinner table instead of in that semi-irritable mood which is apt to succeed hours of shopping. If sums were distributed instead of useful gifts, children would be deprived not only of the pleasures of planning and purchasing, but also of the education in wise giving which such a method affords them.

Money given with the best motives frequently

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falls short of the accomplishment of that which the donor intended. On the other hand, a check is the most acceptable gift that can be bestowed on those who have seen better days, since through pride their most pressing needs are often hidden from their friends.

Children delight in making memoranda, and some very happy evenings can be spent at this time by the little folk, if mamma and papa will show a real interest in each mysterious list which is so carefully guarded from all other eyes. It is well to give children the opportunity to earn the greater part of their Christmas money; in making an addition to this fund it should be understood as final, and that the gifts must come within the amount at their disposal. This lesson well learned will save them endless worry later in life. Comparatively few people do their Christmas shopping as though it were a real pleasure.

As I write, memory recalls a man of mature years who always took a boyish delight in everything pertaining to Christmas. Early in the Autumn he began to make Christmas memoranda, and later in the season, when he had decided upon suitable gifts for those whom he was in the habit



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of remembering, he placed opposite each name the amount of money allowed to that particular person, and did his shopping with such ease and evident enjoyment he was truly the envy and admiration of the rest of his household. He purchased what he could afford, and did not allow himself to stand gazing at and wishing for things that were beyond his limit.

The children's first shopping expedition should be for materials with which to make decorations for the Christmas tree. All are familiar with the pretty chains of silver, gilt, and colored paper, which even very young children can make quite neatly; then there are cornucopias, popcorn strings, tissue-paper flowers and ornaments made of colored cardboard and tinsel, and gold and bronze paint. Hickory-nut dolls, dressed as little Quakeresses, and Chinamen made of peanuts can be easily manufactured at home, and to the alert mother many other helpful suggestions will occur.

I know one mother who regularly plans for four or five shopping expeditions with her little ones at Christmas time. She always has them remove their wraps on entering a shop, and checks them at the parcel counter. The children are thereby

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spared the irritability which is often a result of becoming overheated in the large department stores. Of course, the children are not allowed to go out until they have donned their wraps. I saw her once very effectually forestall a tantrum. Her little six-year-old son did not see the necessity for putting on his overcoat when he was so warm already, and began to sputter a little, whereupon she said with great firmness, "That is the rule when we are shopping in cold weather, and you will have to do it to-day for the air is very sharp outside"; and then she added with a pleasant smile, "But you do not have to come shopping with us, you know, only I should be so sorry not to have you, my little son, for you are such a great help to me with my big shopping-bag and all the little parcels that are so precious we cannot wait to have them sent home." That dear little mother made two strong points and thereby instantly changed the current of her boy's thought from opposition to a disposition to be even more helpful than he had been. She first presented the idea that he need never again have to put on his coat on a shopping expedition, for he did not *have* to come; second, the very mention of his ser-

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vices as parcel carrier brought forth the quick stretching out of his hands for more parcels, and the coat went on without further ado, and the happy little group moved smilingly away.

One of this mother's theories was that children grow thirsty and hungry on such trips, and so they were given several drinks of water at suitable places, from a little drinking-cup she always carried for them. Then there were sandwiches, gingerbread or nourishing crackers of some sort tucked away in the shopping-bag and given when they would least interfere with the appetite for the next meal.

Cross children can often be transformed into the most amiable of little beings by a drink of water, a bite of something to eat, ten minutes' rest and a good "bear's hug" from mother. I have seen the face of an irritable, complaining little Christmas shopper fairly glorified by a request from her mother to help a little lame girl down the steps. Try this plan with your little ones throughout all the Christmas preparations. There is a wonderful transforming power in service; be it great or small, the spirit is that of the Master.

I would urge upon all my readers the impor-

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tance of taking or even *making* time to thread refractory needles, to give a helpful twist to a snarly skein of silk or wool, to keep the paste-pot filled, to add one or two pairs of scissors and to listen with unflagging interest to long whispered conversations about gifts to be made at home or purchased. The more mysterious the Christmas preparations the greater a child's delight, provided he has a share in the mystery.

The children of a near-by school spent many hours very happily last year in making the decorations for some tiny Christmas trees which they took to the Children's Hospital on Christmas Eve.

My own Christmas greeting to you, dear friends, I send in Madeline Bridges's little poem:

There are loyal hearts, there are spirits brave,  
There are souls that are pure and true,  
Then give to the world the best you have,  
And the best shall come back to you.

Give love, and love to your heart will flow,  
A strength in your utmost need:  
Have faith and a score of hearts will show  
Their faith in your word and deed.

For life is the mirror of king and slave,  
'Tis just what you are and do:  
Then give to the world the best you have,  
And the best will come back to you.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Has a mother a right to interfere with her husband's methods of training when she knows them to be wrong?**

It would be very unwise to criticize the husband's methods in the presence of the child. A little tact and patience and some good reasons for her objections will certainly produce a result in the average man, and if he can be inveigled into reading a few practical articles on child nature, the chances are that he will in time prove a valuable ally in proper training of the children. Any warm discussions of methods must be avoided in the presence of the family; a violation of this rule is more than apt to cause a division of the household. I have even known servants to take sides on such occasions. I will welcome letters from other mothers who have to solve this very trying problem.

**Do you not believe it injurious to the health of young children to be kissed on the lips by papas who smoke, by grandparents, aunts, cousins and friends in general? Cannot some other form of adoration be suggested?**

Certainly, a baby's or little child's hands are the most inviting receptacles for kisses; children

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should certainly not be kissed upon the mouth, and should early be taught to turn their own cheek, and to kiss the cheeks of others. It is easy to manifest our affection by a light kiss on baby's forehead or head.

Is not the wearing of deep mourning by the mother a fruitful cause of depression in her children?

Undoubtedly; though they may be too young to voice an objection, they are affected by it. Children love color, and they should be allowed to revel in it. The woman who is in mourning should, for the sake of her children, wear colors in the house. It should make no difference to her what others might think on the subject; besides, the world is growing much wiser and more charitable in this as in other matters.

If one follows the kindergarten methods of allowing the children so much freedom, how can one enforce immediate obedience (on occasions) without giving one's reasons.

I have in mind a family of children who are allowed unusual freedom of thought and action, yet who are perfectly obedient. Ever since their babyhood they have been given the reason for commands and requests as far as practicable, but they have also been *trained* to understand that

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when father or mother said, "You must do this or that at once; I can give you no other reason now than that I know it is right for you to do it," it had to be done, and that promptly.

My little boy of six and one-half years is required to dress himself (with such assistance as is necessary) every morning, and also to learn a short lesson in his first reader. He manages in every way he can think of to avoid doing these little tasks promptly and quickly. He will dawdle away several hours unless I stand beside him and simply compel him to do as I wish; sometimes nothing short of a whipping will induce him to obey. He is a bright, active child, and not at all inclined to indolence. I dislike to whip him, for I do not know that it is the best way to overcome a serious bit of stubborn naughtiness.

This tendency to dawdle is indulged in by many children until it becomes a habit. Suppose you have a serious little talk with your boy before he retires; tell him you want him to be a great man as well as a good one, and that one of the first lessons in greatness is the making one's self do the things one doesn't want to. Ask him if he thinks he could make himself do anything he didn't want to do. Tell him you believe he can; and would he like to really try to dress quickly the next morning? He may look at you suspiciously, but you must be especially bright and sweet with

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him and say to him that you will help him when he really needs help, and that you will count the time by the clock. Urge him on with real enthusiasm in the morning and if he does even fairly well, encourage him, tell him you knew *he* could rule himself when he tried. Get all the historical anecdotes you can find which deal with the vice of tardiness and the virtue of punctuality and repeat them to him at intervals. Ask him to find out from his little companions how long it takes them to dress, and endeavor to rouse some amiable rivalry in this direction. Never whip him for this fault; it will do no good. If he remains obdurate, and is not dressed when breakfast is ready, do not let him have any. Tell him you are very sorry, but you want to help him to become a great man, and this is one way of making him remember to be prompt. Do not appear impatient with him, but rather grieved that you have to punish him. Pursue a similar plan with his reading lesson, trying by every reasonable means to make it of interest to him. It is hardly fair to expect a six-year-old child to realize the value of an education and to apply himself from a sense of duty; give up the reader for a while, help



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him a little with *Æsop's Fables*, get some little story book with words of one syllable and see if he won't surprise you with his progress. Use all your diplomacy, all your tact, but never lose patience. Teach him as soon as you can to tell the time and then suggest that he run a race with the minute hand when he is dressing or studying. I have given so much space to this inquiry because it voices, I believe, one of the perplexing problems that confront many mothers.

Do you approve of allowing boys or girls to spend the night away from home with their most intimate friends?

I do not, as a rule. There are grave reasons why this may be an unsafe procedure, but even the superficial reasons are sufficient to make it plain that their own homes are the places where children should be at nightfall.

What companionship would you suggest for the only child of wealthy parents?

Such a child has my sympathy; in spite of all that can be done for him he misses one of the supremest joys of life in the absence of the companionship and affection of brothers and sisters. He should certainly have daily contact with other children both at school and in his home, and if the

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instinct of true hospitality be developed in him and he be given each day the opportunity of doing some kindness for another, occasionally even at personal sacrifice, he may escape the clutch of that ogre of selfishness which lies in wait for every "only child." In such a case it is a gracious and philanthropic act on the part of the parents to adopt some child, one of whose ancestry they have some knowledge, of course.

Is it wise to insist upon a child of seven, who attends school from nine o'clock in the morning until one o'clock in the afternoon, doing any studying at home?

It is not only *unwise*, but positively cruel, to exact home study of a child that age. The hours are too long; no child of that age should be confined in a school room longer than from nine to twelve or twelve thirty at the outside. With such hours there should be several recess periods, and frequent opportunity for the child to stand up and stretch, and he should be reminded to take an occasional drink of water. The entire afternoon, when the weather admits, should be spent out-of-doors, and the child should be encouraged to enter into all manner of active games, and discouraged at that early age from even opening a book out

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of school. The most pathetic letters come to me from mothers in all parts of the country bearing upon this very question—mothers who are not brave enough to say, “It is more important in my estimation that my child lead a natural life and develop a robust constitution, than that he pass his examinations at the expense of his health.”

It has been demonstrated time and again that the men and women who have distanced their companions in college and in the so-called higher education, were those whose intellectual faculties were not subjected to undue strain in childhood.

How can I overcome the fear of the dark in my children?

Fear of the dark seems to be inherent in the majority of children and is especially noticeable in those of sensitive, nervous temperaments. Do not expect to overcome this fear all at once; the child must outgrow it, and he can do it with your aid and that of the other members of the household.

Do you think children should be allowed to drink tea and coffee?

Most emphatically *no*. There are many convincing arguments against the use of these two beverages even for adults, and so enlightened is

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public opinion on the subject that parents of average intelligence, while indulging themselves in what they admit may possibly be slightly injurious to them, prohibit their children from similar indulgence.

Will you please furnish me with a list of stories suitable for reading aloud to a child of four years of age? He is of a very imaginative temperament, and possibly needs modifying in that direction.

The Classified Book List published by the National Congress of Mothers will meet your need. Such a child needs to have his powers of *observation* cultivated by means of simple nature study, games, etc. His attention should be drawn to beautiful sunsets, and special features in the landscape. The stories read to him should be chiefly about real men, women and things, with fairy tales, etc., as a kind of dessert. Imagination is a beautiful faculty and should never be repressed, but occasionally directed.

I shall be very thankful if you will recommend to me a book that embraces the care, nursing, feeding and clothing of infants and children.

Many such books have been written, but I know of none better than Elisabeth Robinson Scovil's *The Care of Children*.

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Would you *ever* force a child to go to kindergarten who has been going for several months and still has a feeling of homesickness he cannot overcome?

I would not force him to go, but I would go with him and stay with him for several days, and study the teachers and everything connected with the kindergarten with the confident expectation of finding something wrong, for the great majority of children enjoy the kindergarten if it is properly conducted.

K. L. S.—It is difficult to define strictly the duties of a nurse. In small towns or cities nurses are usually willing to do much more than in large cities. One reason of this is because they are more than apt to be acquaintances of those whom they nurse, while in cities they are called to strangers who quite as often as not would impose upon them if they allowed it. In any locality it is well, indeed imperative, in the interest of harmony, to have a clear understanding on both sides at the time the engagement is made. A conscientious nurse will appreciate the circumstances of the family employing her, and will do all she can to mother the other children if they need it, there-

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by relieving the mind of her patient and facilitating her recovery.

M. R.—If your little boy is apparently perfectly well, his extreme restlessness at night may be due to too much covering or to insufficient ventilation of your sleeping room. In ventilating, be very careful that the air does not blow on him.

My little boy of eight is so frightened in a thunder-shower that I fear the results. Although brave and manly in other respects, he becomes cowardly even when he thinks a storm is approaching. He trembles and hides his face, crying and lamenting. Unfortunately, when he was two years old, a barn very near us was struck by lightning and burned. What would you advise me to do? Shall I be a little severe or rock and pet him as I have done? He seems to become more nervous as he grows older. Kindly suggest a remedy.

No form of severity will overcome such a fear. It is more than probable that the child continued to hear harrowing accounts of the burning of the barn for a year or two after its occurrence, and the event was thereby deeply impressed upon his baby mind. Suppose you take a physical geography some summer afternoon, when the sky is full of drifting clouds in a great field of blue. Turn to the pictures of clouds, read aloud their rather musical names, until the little fellow can

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say them after you; then study the sky with him and see how many of the classified clouds are visible. After he is thoroughly interested himself, call in two or three of his companions and let him explain to them all he has learned. Then ask these little companions, not your own boy, if they have ever noticed the clouds in a storm. Draw from them some expression of admiration if you can, watching your little son closely all the time. Plan a meeting on your piazza at the approach of the next storm, telling them in advance how the rain washes the air, cleansing it from impurities, and what good friends the thunder and lightning are. Never show the slightest fear yourself, no matter how terrific the storm. Keep your boy away from people who are nervous at such times. Explain to him that God cares for him in the tempest just the same as in the calm. Prohibit all discussions of storms in his presence, frowning even upon an honored guest who would thoughtlessly add to childish fears. Get him to stand near the window and watch the storm with you, and smile reassuringly into his eyes at every flash of lightning. Call him your brave little son, who has made up his mind to enjoy the storm as you do.

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We live in a city block, and seldom go away during the Summer. When the weather is very hot, should I make my young children go to bed at 8 o'clock, though it is so warm in the bedrooms that they cannot sleep, but toss restlessly about?

If you can utilize your roof by stretching an awning over it, you will have an ideal sleeping apartment. Of course, the edge of the roof should be carefully guarded by a strong railing or coping, over which the most adventurous child could not climb. If the roof bedroom be not practicable, it is better to let the children sit on the doorstep, even if they go to sleep there, until the interior of the house cools off a little. They should be kept in the house during the heated period of the day, and made to lie down and rest whether they can sleep or not.

Please tell me what I can do to make my boy, who is six years of age, expand his chest. He has a habit of appearing hollow-chested or round-shouldered when walking.

With a child so young your efforts at health culture will be more effective if supplemented with the spirit of play. Have your little boy stand as flat against the wall as possible, head erect, and mark his height in this position; then let him resume the round-shouldered attitude, and make



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another mark. The difference between the two marks will be perceptible. Show him a picture of the spinal column in profile, explain how wonderfully the little bones are fastened together, and how important it is that he should stand, walk and sit erect, so that he will grow into a straight, well-made man. When undressing the children at night show him his little brother's or sister's spinal column, let him count the bones, and then explain to him as well as you can the position of the lungs; you may tell him they are like bags filled with air, and that if he stoops in walking or sitting the bags get mashed and all the air cannot get into them which should be there. Then stand the children in a row and let your little son place one hand on each side of his little brother's and sister's ribs, and feel the movement they make as the little one takes a deep breath and exhales it. He will, with your aid, quickly discover that the erect position admits of much deeper breathing than the round-shouldered posture. Have the children take breathing exercises every night and morning, and as often through the day as you think of it. Among the lads of your little son's acquaintance note those that carry themselves well, and fre-

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quently say in your boy's hearing, "What a straight, manly little fellow Johnnie L—— is; he will grow into a fine, handsome boy." Never say "I only wish *you* were as straight as Johnnie L——. I can't see what makes you stoop so; you are a perfect sight, all hunched up like that." Do not tell him *not* to stoop, but say with your most winning smile, "I do want to be proud of my straight little son, and you and mother will have a secret between them; whenever I think you can stand, sit or walk a little straighter I will lift my eyebrows a little and smile at you, and you must remind me in the same way, so that we can both be straight together."

All mothers will find *Health Chats with Young Readers*, by Mrs. A. B. Kelly, an exceedingly helpful, suggestive little book. I have answered this question at such length because I receive so many queries of a similar nature.

Is it wise to allow a girl of thirteen to attend parties with boys of her own age after dark?

As a rule I should say no. If the distance is short, and there are several girls and boys going together, and you have confidence in the personnel of the party, you might make an exception to this

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rule, but the exceptions should be few. Girls and boys of that age, even those with the best intentions, require chaperoning and discreet supervision.

My sixteen-month-old daughter is just reaching the age when I must find some means to prevent her handling my ornaments or put them away. Is the latter the wise course, until she has developed some sense of responsibility? It has not seemed so to me, but when she repeatedly puts her little finger on a vase and looks at me as much as to say "What are you going to do about it?" I am puzzled to find a punishment to fit the crime. She is so quick in minding me usually that I'm sure she knows what I mean and is testing me. Would you advise striking her hand? I haven't liked to teach her that trick, and I shall be glad to know of the approved method of dealing with my little people whose reason and memory are not to be counted on.

You have a fine opportunity for inculcating obedience (observe I do not say enforcing obedience, though that may be necessary if all other methods fail); for it is at just such an early age as this that your little one learns the strength of your Yes or No, and this lesson once learned, it will be a comparatively simple matter to guide with firm but gentle authority until "reason" and "memory" are to be relied upon. Say to your wee daughter when she touches a vase, "No," in a positive tone, but of course not an irritable one.

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She will nine times out of ten quickly withdraw her hand, glance at you, and hold her hand in readiness to repeat the act. Do not let her see in your eyes the slightest doubt of your own ability to cope with the situation; *look* as firm as adamant, however you may feel. She will hesitate, and in that instant divert her attention to something else, or step quickly to her side and say, "Mamma will show baby the pretty vase." Then, placing it in your lap, let her look at it to her heart's content, then holding it very carefully as an object lesson, put it back in place, saying "Mamma will show it to baby again sometime." At intervals show all the ornaments in this way. If the little one exacts this attention at an inconvenient season, say very firmly, "No, not now; mamma is busy," and immediately set her some simple task to do, saying, "Please come help mamma now."

Through being strangers in a strange city, my little girl (six and one-half years) and I are dependent on one another's society a great deal. It is time she started her education. She is very nervous when with other children, and her father and I disapprove of schools of two sessions (public schools). We know of a lady who formerly taught in a private school, who goes out by the hour teaching. We had engaged her to come to the house to teach our child. Now, what I want to know is: Does that kind of instruc-

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tion come under the compulsory education laws or can they force us to put her in a public school? We are making a sacrifice thus to educate her, and wish her to go slowly.

You need have no fear of the compulsory education law, since you can readily prove your child is receiving instruction. As children require some companionship, I would advise you, as soon as you become sufficiently acquainted, to endeavor to get one or two other mothers to join you, and have their children taught with yours. If your little daughter's nervousness in the presence of two or three other congenial little children should not in time disappear, I shall be much surprised.

What course is to be pursued with a little child of four who does not wish to go to kindergarten?

I know a mother who went regularly to kindergarten with her little daughter for a week. At the end of that time the child's fears had vanished, her interest had been aroused and she made no objection to going thereafter. Personally I should not force a four-year-old child to attend a school of any kind.



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